

S E N E C A's
M O R A L S,
BY WAY OF
A B S T R A C T.

To which is prefixed,

THE LIFE OF THE AUTHOR.

A NEW TRANSLATION.



L O N D O N:

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T H E
L I F E
O F T H E
A U T H O R.

SENECA was born at Corduba in Spain, about the beginning of the Christian æra, of an equestrian family, which had probably been transplanted thither, in a colony from Rome. He was the second son of Marcus Annæus Seneca, commonly called the rhetorician, whose remains are printed under the title of *Suasoriæ, & Controversiæ, cum Declamationum Excerptis*; and his younger brother Annæus Mela, for there were three of them, was memorable for being the father of the poet Lucan. He was removed to Rome, together with his father and the rest of his family, while he was yet in his infancy; and so very small, that, as he himself tells us, he was carried thither in the arms of his aunt. There he was educated in the most liberal manner, and under the best masters. He learned his eloquence from his father; but his genius rather leading him to phi-

lofophy, he put himfelf under the ftoics Attalus, Sotion, and Papirius Fabianus; men famous in their way, and of whom he has made honourable mention in his writings. It is probable too, that he travelled when he was young, fince we find him in feveral parts of his works, particularly in his *Quæftiones Naturales*, making very exact and curious obfervations upon Egypt and the Nile. But this, though intirely agreeable to his own humour, did not at all correpond with that fcheme or plan of life, which his father had drawn out for him; who therefore forced him to the bar, and put him upon foliciting for public employments; fo that he afterwards became queftor, prætor, and, as Lipfius will have it, even conful.

IN the firft year of the reign of Claudius, when Julia the daughter of Germanicus was accused of adultery by Meffalina, and banifhed, Seneca was banifhed too, being charged as one of the adulterers. Corfica was the feat of his exile, where he lived eight years; “happy,” as he tells us, “in the midft “of thofe things, which ufually make other people “miferable;” and where he wrote his books of confolation, addreffed to his mother Helvia, and to his friend Polybius, and perhaps fome of thofe tragedies which go under his name; for he fays, *modo fe levioribus ftudiis ibi oblectaffe*. When Agrippina was married to Claudius, as fhe was upon the death of Meffalina, fhe prevailed with the emperor to recal Seneca from banifhment; and afterwards procured him to be tutor to her fon Nero, whom fhe defigned for the

empire. By the bounty and generosity of his royal pupil, he acquired that prodigious wealth, which rendered him in a manner equal to kings. His houses and walks were the most magnificent in Rome. His villas were innumerable: and he had immense sums of money placed out at interest in almost every part of the world. The historian Dio reports him to have had two hundred and fifty thousand pounds sterling at interest in Britain alone, and reckons his calling it in all at a sum as one of the causes of a war with that nation.

ALL this wealth however, together with the luxury and effeminacy of a court, does not appear to have had any ill effect upon the temper and disposition of Seneca. He continued abstemious, exact in his manners, and, above all, free from the vices so commonly prevalent in such places, flattery and ambition. "I had rather," said he to Nero, "offend you by speaking the truth, than please you by lying and flattery." How well he acquitted himself in quality of preceptor to his prince, may be known from the five first years of Nero's reign, which have always been considered as a perfect pattern of good government; and if that emperor had but been as observant of his master through the whole course of it, as he was at the beginning, he would have been the delight, and not, as he afterwards proved, the curse and detestation of mankind. But when Poppæa and Tigellinus had got the command of his humour, and hurried him into the most extravagant and abominable vices, he soon grew weary of his master, whose

life must indeed have been a constant rebuke to him. Seneca perceiving, that his favour declined at court, and that he had many accusers about the prince, who were perpetually whispering in his ears the great riches of Seneca, his magnificent houses, and fine gardens, and what a favourite through their means he was grown with the people, made an offer of them all to Nero. Nero refused to accept them, which however did not hinder Seneca from changing his way of life; for, as Tacitus relates, “he kept no more levees, declined the usual civilities which had been paid to him, and, under a pretence of indisposition or some engagement or other, avoided as much as possible appearing in public.”

NERO in the mean time, who, as it is supposed, had dispatched Burrhus by poison, could not be easy till he had rid himself of Seneca also: for Burrhus and Seneca were to Nero, what Agrippa and Mæcenas had been to Augustus; the one the manager of his military concerns, the other of his civil. Accordingly he attempted, by means of Cleonicus, a freedman of Seneca, to take him off by poison; but this not succeeding, he ordered him to be put to death, upon an information, that he was conscious to Piso's conspiracy against his person. Not that he had any real proof of Seneca's being at all concerned in this plot, but only that he was glad to lay hold of any pretence for destroying him. He left Seneca however at liberty to chuse his manner of dying, who caused his veins to be opened immediately; his friends standing round him, whose tears he en-

deavoured to stop, sometimes by gently admonishing, sometimes by sharply rebuking them. His wife Paulina, who was very young in comparison of himself, had yet the resolution and affection to bear him company, and thereupon ordered her veins to be opened at the same time; but as Nero had no particular spite against her, and was not willing to make his cruelty more odious and insupportable than there seemed occasion for, he gave orders to have her death prevented; upon which her wounds were bound up, and the blood stopped in just time to save her; though, as Tacitus says, she looked so miserably pale and wan all her life after, that it was easy to read the loss of her blood and spirits in her countenance. In the mean time Seneca, finding his death slow and lingring, desired Statius Annæus his physician to give him a dose of poison, which had been prepared some time before, in case it should be wanted; but this not having its usual effect, he was carried to a hot bath, where he was at length stifled with the steam. He died, as Lipsius conjectures, in the sixty-third or fourth year of his age, and in about the tenth or eleventh of Nero's reign. There was a rumour, that Subrius Fabrius, in a private conversation with the centurions, had resolved, and not without Seneca's knowledge of it, that when Nero should have been slain by Piso, Piso himself should have been killed too, and the empire delivered up to Seneca, as to one who deserved it for his integrity and virtue. But what foundation there was for it, is not said.

THE works of Seneca are so well known by the

several editions which have been published, that we need not be particular in an account of them. Some have imagined, that he was a Christian, and that he held a correspondence with St. Paul by letters. He must have heard of Christ and his doctrine, and his curiosity might lead him to make some enquiry about them; but as for the letters published under the names of the Philosopher and Apostle, they have long been declared spurious by the critics, and perfectly unworthy of either of them. To know whether Seneca was a Christian or no, we need only observe a circumstance which Tacitus relates of him, at the time of his death; viz. "that, when he entered the bath, he took of the water and sprinkled those about him, saying, 'that he offered those libations to Jupiter his deliverer.'"

It was to the labours of the learned Justus Lipsius that the public were indebted for the first good edition of the works of Seneca the philosopher; which were twice handsomely printed in folio, and afterwards, with the works of Seneca the rhetorician, and notes by John Frederic Gronovius, at Amsterdam, 1672, in three volumes, 8vo.





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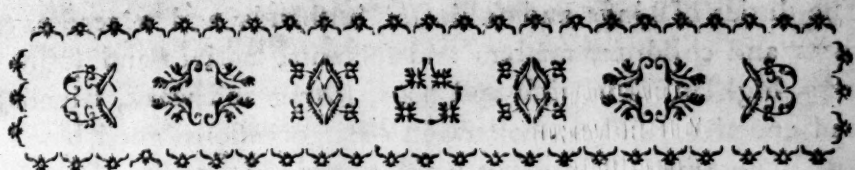
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S E N E C A

O F

B E N E F I T S.

C H A P. I.

Of Benefits in general.

THE common ignorance of the world in the matter of exchanging benefits, is probably one of the most hurtful mistakes of a rash and thoughtless life, and which proceeds from an error partly in the thing itself, and partly in the person we would confer an obligation upon. To begin with the former; *A benefit is doing a good office with judgment and intention*; meaning, with a proper attention to every circumstance of *how, why, what, where, when, how much, to whom*, and the like. Or, in other respects, *It is a free and benevolent action; the comfort and service the receiver has from it gives pleasure to the giver.* It will be difficult to draw this subject either into method or compass, the one on account of the great variety and intricacy of cases, the other because of the large extent of it; for almost the whole business of mankind falls under this head:

A

The duties of kings and subjects, husbands and wives, parents and children, masters and servants, natives and strangers, high and low, rich and poor, strong and weak, friends and enemies. The recollection of it occasions good blood and generosity, instructing us in honour, humanity, friendship, piety, gratitude, prudence, and justice. Of all human duties the most necessary to the well-being of every individual, and of reasonable nature, the blessing of particulars, and the cement of all communities, is the art and dexterity of bestowing benefits. The person who does good is sufficiently rewarded by the inward satisfaction he feels in serving his neighbour.

* *Necessary, profitable, and pleasing benefits.*

THERE are different sorts of benefits; as * *necessary, profitable and pleasing.* There are some things we *cannot* live without, others which we *should not* live without, and some which we *will not* live without. Those which deliver us from great dangers, or fears of death, must be ranked first, and the kindness is valued according to the danger, as the obligation is great in comparison to the extremity. The next case is that we may live, but we had better die; as in the question of modesty, liberty, and a good conscience. What follows in the third place are those things which are rendered dear to us by custom, affinity, and acquaintance; as husbands, wives, children, friends, &c. preserved by an honest man, at the utmost hazard: Of profitable things there is a large field; as money, honour, &c. Pleasure and superfluity may also be added; but we shall open a way to the circumstances of a benefit, by some prior and more general considerations.

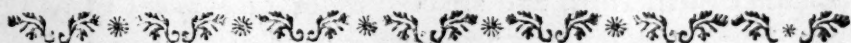


CHAP. II.

Several Kinds of Benefits.

BENEFITS may be divided into * * *Vulgar and absolute; the one a matter of trade only, the other appertaining to a good life.* The latter can never be made void, and is therefore the most excellent; whereas all material benefits are tossed backward and forward, and change their master. Some offices there are which resemble benefits, but are only desirable conveniences, such as riches, &c. and these may be received by a good man from an evil, or by a wicked man from a good. Again, there are others which have the appearance of injuries, and are only benefits mistaken, as burning, lancing, and cutting under the hand of a surgeon. The most excellent benefits are those of good education, received from parents, either in a state of ignorance or perverseness; their tenderness and care in our infancy; their correction in our childhood, to keep us to our duties by fear; and in case indulgence will not succeed, to proceed to severity and punishment, without which we should never have arrived at any good. There are matters of great value which often appear trifling, such as instructions from a tutor, medicines from a physician, &c. and also trifling matters may be of great value to us. The consequence of a small gift may be great; a man's life may be saved in time of need by a cup of cold water: Some things are of great consequence to the receiver, and others to the giver. I have a house given me by one; another person snatches me out of it when there is a hazard of its falling upon my head: One man gives me an estate, another catches me out of the fire, or throws me a rope to save me from sinking: We do some good offices to friends, others to strangers; the noblest are those done to persons who

deserved them not. There are obligations of generosity, and obligations of charity; one in point of convenience, and the other in case of necessity. Some benefits are personal, others common; as if a prince grant a privilege to a city out of pure grace, the community is obligated to him; and upon every individual only, as a part of the whole; but if it is done for my sake only, I alone am debtor for it. The duties of hospitality are, cherishing strangers, protecting and relieving the distressed. There are benefits of good advice, reputation, life, liberty, health, fortune, pleasure, and superfluity. One man obliges me by consolation, one out of his purse, and another gives me matter of curiosity and ornament. Not to mention negative benefits; for some people look upon it as an obligation to do a person no hurt. In short, benevolence is an excellent virtue, and every person, as well poor as rich, are able to give and receive benefits.



CHAP. III.

A Father may be obliged by his Son, and a Master by his Servant.

IN the first place the question is, Whether a father may not be more indebted to a son, in some respects, than a son to a father for his being? There is no dispute but many sons are both better and greater than their fathers; there are many things which derive their beings from others, which are much greater than their original. For instance, the tree is larger than the seed, the river larger than the fountain; the foundation of all things is obscured by the superstructure. If I owe all to my father, because he gave me being, I am equally indebted to a physician, who saved his life; for I would never have been begotten, had my father not recovered; or if I owe all that I am to my beginning, my acknowledgment must go back to the original of all human beings: It is to

my father I owe the gift of life, which he could never have given me, had it not first been given to him by his father. He gave me life, insensible to whom he gave it, and when I could neither feel nor fear death. It is a great benefit to give life to a person who knows how to use it properly, and is capable of the fears of death. Certainly I could never have had a being without a father, and that being could never have been improved without a nurse; I do not therefore owe my virtue either to my birth or my nurse. The generation of me was the smallest part of the benefit: Brutes may live, but the chief end of living is to live well; and except what is got by a good education, that virtue is all my own. It does not of course follow that the *first* benefit is the most *material*, because the greatest benefit could not have been without the first. The son can derive life from the father but once; but if the father's life is often saved by the son, though he is but performing his duty in doing so, yet the benefit done to the father is the greatest; and the more a man stands in need of a benefit, the greater it is. A person in being hath more need of life than he that is unborn, so that the father, in the continuance of his life, receives a greater benefit than a son in the beginning of his life. If a son put himself upon the rack for his father, or deliver him from it, he does more than his father did by giving him birth, which is but the common office of a father, a benefit given by chance; besides he had a share in it, and a respect to his family: He received a happy life for giving a life. I was brought into the world by my mother, naked, exposed, and void of reason; but my virtue has advanced my reputation and fortune. Scipio, in his minority, delivered his father in a battle with Hannibal; and afterwards from the prosecution of a powerful faction, covering him with the spoils of public enemies, and consulary honours. He made himself eminent for his moderation, as well as for his military knowledge and piety: He was the establisher and defender of his country: He left the empire without a rival, and made

himself the security of Rome, as well as the ornament of it. And by all this Scipio did certainly more than requite his father for barely begetting him. Whether did Anchises more for Æneas, in dandling the child in his arms, or Æneas for his father, when he carried him through the flames of Troy upon his back, and made his name celebrated among the founders of the Roman Empire? T. Manlius had a harsh and imperious father, who banished him from his house as a stupid fellow; and a shame to his family: This Manlius being informed that his father's life was in question, and a day fixed for his trial, he went to the tribune, and concerned himself in his cause, and conversed with him upon it. The tribune acquainted him with the appointed time, and told him, that part of his accusation would be his cruel behaviour to his son. Upon which information Manlius taking the tribune aside, and presenting a poinard to his breast, says, *Swear that you will let this cause drop, or I will plunge this dagger in your heart; you shall chuse which way to deliver my father.* The tribune swore, and kept his promise, and represented the matter fairly to the council. He that makes himself renowned by his eloquence, justice, or arms, honours his extraction, be it ever so mean, and gives his parents great satisfaction. Sophroniscus would never have been heard of, had it not been for his son Socrates; and we should never have heard of Ariosto and Gryllus, had it not been for Xenophon and Plato.

THE veneration due to parents ought not to be lessened on this account, nor to make children the less attentive to their duty, but better, and more generous; for, in contests of good offices, both parties are pleased; those that are vanquished as well as those that succeed. The most honourable dispute that can arise between a father and a son is, which shall do the other the greatest benefit.

WE must distinguish betwixt
 * *A master may be obliged by his servant.* * benefits, duties, and actions ministerial betwixt master and servant.

We look upon *benefits* to be those good offices done by strangers freely. *Duties* are the parts of sons and wives, and incumbent upon relations and kindred. *Ministerial actions* belong to the part of a servant. And as it is the *mind*, and not the *condition*, that imprints the value upon the benefit, a master may be obliged by his servant, a sovereign by his subject, and a general by a common soldier, by doing more than he is under a necessity to do. In cases where the law neither commands nor forbids, servants are free. It would be deemed a hardship to chastise a servant for an omission of his duty, and not to be rewarded for doing more. It is true, his body is his master's property, but his mind belongs to himself; and there are many orders as improper to be obeyed by a servant, as for a master to impose upon him. No man is so great but he may stand in need of assistance, and fear the power of the lowest mortal. One servant occasions the death of his master; another preserves his master's life, with the hazard or loss of his own: This is an exceeding great benefit in a servant.

WHEN Domitius was besieged at Corfinium, and the place brought to great extremity, he intreated his servant to give him poison, who at last was prevailed on; he gave him a poison, which was only an innocent opiate, and Domitius outlived it. Cæsar took the town, and granted Domitius his life, but he owed it to his servant.

IN another town which was besieged, when it was upon the last pinch two servants escaped, and went over to the enemy: When the Romans entered the town, in the heat of the soldiers' fury, these two men ran immediately home, took their mistress out of the house, and chased her before them, informing every person they met how ill she had used them formerly, but they would now be revenged: When they got her without the gates, they kept her secret till all the danger was over; by which means they preserved their mistress's life, and she gave them their freedom. This did not shew a mean and servile mind, to do so good an action

under an appearance of great villainy: If they had not passed for parricides and deserters, they would not have accomplished their purpose. I shall conclude this chapter with one instance more, and that a very brave one.

IN the time of the civil wars of Rome, a party came in search of a person of quality, who was proscribed; a servant dressed himself in his master's cloaths, and gave himself up to the soldiers, as the master of the house; he was taken into custody, and suffered death undiscovered. What could be more glorious, in an age when servants were so ready to betray their masters, to suffer death for his such faithful tenderness, in a public cruelty; such unconquerable faith in a general corruption? What could exceed this virtue, to chuse death as a reward for fidelity, rather than any great advantages he might have had by betraying his master?



CHAP. IV.

It is not the Matter, but the Intention, that makes the Benefit.

THE fountain of all benefits is the good intention of the benefactor; it is that alone which makes the *benefit* valuable. Some people mistake the *matter* for the *benefit*, and tax the favour by measure and weight. When a present is made them, they cast it up: *What is the value of such a house? Such an estate? Such an office?* As if that were really the benefit, which is only the mark of it; for the favour is in the mind, and not in the thing itself; and all the advantages which we handle, see, or possess by the civility of another person, are but several customs or manners of explaining and putting into execution the good intention. There needs no art to prove, that both benefits and injuries derive their value from the intention, since even brutes are

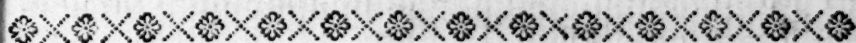
capable of determining this question. If by accident you tread upon a dog, or give him pain by dressing a wound, the one he bears as an accident, but, in his way, looks upon the other as a favour; but if you attempt to give him a blow, though you do not hurt him, he flies at you for the hurt you intended him.

A FARTHER observation is, all * be- * *Benefits are all*
 nefits are good, and made up of wisdom *good.*
 and bounty, like the distributions of providence; the gift is neither good nor bad of itself, but may be applied indifferently either to the one or other. The benefit is lasting, but the gift perishable, as the benefit continues when we have not the use of the matter. He that was alive is now dead; he that did see, has lost his eye-sight; whatever is done cannot be rendered undone. For instance, I have a friend taken by pirates, I redeem him; again he falls into other pirates' hands, yet my favour to him is not the less, though he has again lost his freedom. If I make a present of a sum of money to a person, and it is taken away from him again by thieves, the obligation of the gift is not less; or if I save a man from one misfortune, and he happens to fall into another, my service to him still deserves acknowledgment. We may be deprived of the matter of a benefit by fortune, but the benefit still remains. If the benefit continued in the matter, what is serviceable to one man will be so to another; whereas the same things have very different effects when given to different persons; what will cure one person, will kill another. A proper or improper time makes great difference; an imperial crown is not so great a favour at some time as a crust of bread in a time of necessity. In time of battle, nothing is more common than to kill a friend and save an enemy; yet this disappointment does not affect the intention. If a man cures me of a wen by a blow which was intended to cut off my head; or by a blow given me upon the stomach out of ill nature, an imposthume be broke: or if by a draught prepared for poison a man's life may be saved: yet the provi-

dence of the issue does not at all discharge the obliquity of the intent. In religion the same reason holds good; the offerings or incense does not make it acceptable to the supreme being, but the sincerity of the worshipper. Nor is the will, without the action, sufficient, where we have the means of action; in that case, to *wish* well signifies little; to wish good without doing it, is to no purpose. To make me indebted for a benefit, there must be effect as well as intention; but it is entirely discharged by willing against it. In short, the conscience can be the only judge of benefits and injuries.

* *Judgment must accompany the good will.*

BECAUSE benefits remain in the good will, we are not to imagine the * good will to be always a benefit, as it often proves a very great injury: for if not accompanied with discretion and government, they can be called only works of chance or passion. One man out of ignorance does me good, another upon force, a third by mistake, none of which cases do I look upon as favours, as they are not intended as such to me. We do not think ourselves obliged to the seas for the advantage we reap by navigation, nor to the rivers for the fish we are supplied with, nor thankful to the trees for their fruits or shades, or the winds for blowing fair; and where is the difference between a reasonable creature that does not know, and an inanimate that cannot? One man's life is saved by a good horse, another's by a good suit of arms, and a person without intention may save a third: Where is the difference of the obligation? a man may be cured of an ague by falling into a river; this may be called a lucky mischance, but cannot be termed a remedy. And so in regard to all the good we receive accidentally, the intention, not the thing, distinguishes a benefit from an injury.



CHAP. V.

It is necessary that there be a Judgment in Benefits as well as Matter and Intention, particularly in the Choice of the Benefit.

AS it is the good intention of a benefit that enhances the value of it, many things should be considered; the smallest error either in the matter, person, time, place, quality or quantity, may spoil it.

A MATERIAL circumstance is the * *Achief circumstance is the choice of the person.* choice of the person*; for we must not give by chance, but by choice. I am bound in justice and duty to serve one man; my inclination tells me to oblige another; here it is piety, there it is encouragement, and elsewhere it is charity. To some people who want I have no inclination to be generous, because their wants would not be lessened by my gift. I would press one person to accept of a benefit, when I would offer it faintly to another. In short, we cannot make a better use of our money, than in bestowing it properly where it is wanted; it is not to relations, countrymen, or acquaintance, nor to any particular condition of men, that we should withhold bounties, but bestow them upon the most needful and deserving. To some that are good we give benefits, and to others to induce them to be so; but all should be done prudently, as we are answerable for what we give as well as what we receive. It is a greater crime to misplace a benefit than not to receive it; the one is my fault, but the other is the fault of another man. A mistake of the giver is often an excuse to an ungrateful receiver. It is rather an extravagance than a benefit, to place a favour wrong; and a rash bounty is a scandalous loss. If I oblige a man who is considerate, sincere, grateful, temperate, not mean, nor covetous,

and good-tempered, though he is not possessed of one shilling, I have accomplished my design. If we bestow benefits in hopes of returns being made to us, we neglect the principal objects of charity, the sick, the oppressed, the captive, and needy. When we do a favour to those who have it not in their power to return it, such as a poor man upon his death-bed, or a stranger upon his last farewell, providence is then indebted to us, and we have pleasure in being conscious of a fruitless benefit. But we are improper judges where to place our favours, while we are affected with passions, wandering hopes and fears, and pleasures, the most unmanly of all vices. But when we are threatened by death, and make our last will, we bestow our fortunes upon the most worthy persons. A person who gives nothing but in hopes of receiving, must die without a will. The honesty of another man's heart moves mine to kindness, and there is pleasure in obliging a grateful man; but it shall not entirely prevent me from doing a favour to a person I know to be ungrateful; with this difference, that I will to my own hurt oblige the one, when I will serve the other only as far as it is convenient for me. You will say, how shall I know the disposition of a person, whether he be grateful or not? I must imagine the best. The sailor is not certain of reaching his port, nor he that sows to reap, nor the soldier to win the battle; a man that marries is not certain that his wife will be faithful, or his children dutiful; must we therefore neither marry, sow, sail, nor bear arms? Nay, if I was assured of the ingratitude of a man, yet I would not refuse to put him in his way; he should draw water at my well, light his candle at mine, which may be in service to him, and cannot be looked upon as a benefit from me, as I do it not for his sake, but for my own, as I do it as an office of humanity, without any intended kindness.



CHAP. VI.

The Matter of Obligations, with its Circumstances.

THE choice of the person is followed by that of the matter, in which we must observe the time, place, quality, proportion, and humour. One man values his safety above his honour, another his honour above his peace; and several never care what become of their souls, so that they may save their bodies: By which means good offices greatly depend upon construction. One person imagines himself to be obliged when in reality he is not, and another will not believe it when he is.

LET us observe for our better direction, that a * benefit is a common tie betwixt a giver and receiver, and respects both. For which reason it must be suited to the rules of discretion; for every thing has its bounds and measures, which liberality must also

* *A benefit is a common tie betwixt giver and receiver.*

have, that it be neither too much for the one, nor too little for the other, an excess on either side being as bad as the defect. Alexander the Great gave a city to one of his favourites, who modestly excused himself, saying, *That it was too much for him to receive: Well, but,* replies Alexander, *it is not too much for me to give:* A speech certainly as imprudent as haughty; for what was improper for one to give, was not less so for the other to receive. To be continually loading people with benefits, passes with some for greatness of mind; but to know how to receive, and how to give, are two different things. Give me a heart that is free and easy, and let it be bountiful with judgment. How much greater was he that refused the city, than the other that offered it? Some people lavish away their money as though they were enraged at it, which is for the most part the error of large fortunes

and weak understandings. What comes to a man by chance is very little esteemed; but when it is governed by reason, it gives credit both to the receiver and giver; whereas those favours are in some degree scandalous which make a man ashamed of his benefactor.

FOR the benefactor to suit the * benefit to the condition of the receiver, is a very prudent matter; for he must either be his equal, his superior, or his inferior; and what would greatly oblige the one, would perhaps affront the other: As a plate of broken

meat would do a great deal of service to a poor man, so it would very much disoblige a rich one. The benefits of kings and great men are honours, posts, profitable commissions, monies, and protection; whereas the poor man has nothing but industry, care, good-will, faith, good advice, the service and hazard of his person, and perhaps a present of some cheap curiosity: Equals indeed may bestow favours of like value; but we must observe this general rule, that whatsoever the present be, or to whomsoever we offer it, we always intend the benefit and satisfaction of the receiver, and never grant any thing which may injure him. For a man to say he was overcome by importunity is foolish; for when the heat of the action is over, we hate the man who was prevailed upon to our destruction. I will no more ruin a man with his own inclination, than forbear saving him contrary to it. In some cases, to deny is a benefit, and to grant is not so: So that the advantage of the petitioner is rather to be considered than the desire. For we may, when in a passion, beg for a thing, which we would not be well pleased if it was refused us, and which very thing, upon second thoughts, we may curse, as being the occasion of the most pernicious bounty. Never bestow any thing which will turn to infamy, shame, or mischief. I will be considerate of another person's want or safety only so far as not to forget my own: unless in the case of a very excellent person, and then I shall not mind much what

becomes of myself. There is no putting a sword into a mad person's hand: And he that gives a man money to take him to a bawdy-house, or a weapon for his revenge, makes himself a partaker of his crime.

A PERSON who desires to make an * *An acceptable acceptable* * present will pitch upon some- *present.* thing that cannot easily be found, and is desired by the person to whom it is presented, and which may be often in his eye, that it may remind him of his benefactor. That which is lasting and durable is the best; as statues rather than apparel, plate than money, for it will serve as a monitor to remind the receiver of the obligation, which cannot be so well done by the presenter. Nevertheless, let it not be improper, as toys to a philosopher, arms to a woman, or books to a clown: That which a person cannot receive I will not give him, as if I threw a ball to a man who has no hands, but, I will make a *return*, though he cannot receive it; for my business is to free myself, not to oblige him: Nor any thing that may reproach a man for his wickedness or infirmity; as spectacles to a blind man, or false dice to a cheat. Let it not be unreasonable neither, as an umbrella when the snow lies upon the ground in winter, or a furred gown in the sultry heat of summer. If the present we bestow upon a person was never given by me to any other, nor to him by any body else, it makes the present more valuable; for that is welcome to nobody which we give to every body. The particularity does a great deal, but yet the same thing may be very differently esteemed by several persons; for it may be so marked and recommended, that if the same good office be done to twenty people, they shall all imagine themselves particularly obliged; as a crafty whore, let her have an hundred gallants, will make each of them believe that she loves him best. But this is the art of conversation rather than its virtue.

WHEN Alexander the Great * was in **The present must be singular.* the height of his glory, ambassadors were

sent him by the citizens of Megara, to compliment him with the freedom of that city. Alexander smiled at it; upon which they said to him, that they had never bestowed that present upon any person but Hercules and himself. Upon which Alexander accepted of it, and treated them civilly; not for the sake of those who presented it, but because they had joined him with Hercules, how unreasonably soever: for Hercules conquered not out of any advantageous view to himself, but to protect the wretched: But this rash youth was brought up in violent pursuits from his very infancy; the common enemy of all mankind, both friends and foes, and one that valued himself upon making mortals cringe and be obedient to him: never considering that the dullest animals are not less dreadful and dangerous than the fiercest; for a man may be as soon killed by the tooth of a snake, or the poison of a toad, as the paw of a lion.



C H A P. VII.

The Manner of obliging.

NO benefit is so glorious in itself, but the value of it may be greatly enhanced by the manner in which it is conferred. The profit rests in the skilful application of the *matter*, the virtue in the *intent*; but the being and ornament of an obligation lies in the *manner* of it; and when the dignity of the office is accompanied with all the charms and delicacies of good-nature, address and humanity, then it is perfect. It must be also quickly dispatched, for he that puts a man off from time to time never makes the value of the favour half so great as it really is.

* *Give frankly.* **WHATSOEVER** we intend to give let us give it frankly*: A generous benefactor makes a man happy as much as he can, and as *soon* as

he can. There should be no *delay* in a benefit, but the modesty of the person to whom you intend to present it. If we cannot foresee the request, let us however immediately grant it, and let it not be repeated again. To have a person say a second time, *I beg*, is a vexing affair; the very word puts a man out of countenance; and it is a double kindness to do the thing, and save an honest man the confusion of blushing. What comes for the asking, comes too late; for what we obtain at the expence of our prayers costs us very dear: we give no more for heaven itself; and even there, where our petitions are of the fairest, we chuse rather to present them in secret ejaculations than openly. The benefit which meets the receiver half-way is acceptable and lasting. We should *give* as we would *receive*, quickly and without hesitating; for the benefit which you give not freely is not near so valuable as it would otherwise be. Nay, if you should have any occasion to hesitate, however do not seem to *deliberate*; for *demurring* is next to *denying*; and we are unwilling so long as we suspend. To keep people in suspense is the court fashion; for they hesitate not to injure a person, but are slow in doing him a favour. Great ministers are delighted with seeing men attending and begging their favour; and they reckon it a mark of their power to hold their suitors in suspense, and to have numberless witnesses of their interest. Every possible means should be used to make a benefit acceptable, that the receiver, who should never forget it, may gratefully retain it in his mind. There should be no mixture of severity, stubbornness, reproof or sourness with our obligations; nay, in case an admonition should be needful, let it be referred till another time. Injuries are far apter to be remembered than benefits; and it is enough to forgive an obligation, that has the nature of an offence.

SOME people spoil a good office at the *Give cheerfully*. very time they are doing it; and others after it is done. There must be so much importunity and intreaty: nay, if we do but suspect a petitioner, we do not seem well-pleased; look another way; pretend that we are very

much hurried, or company wait for us; turn the discourse upon a different subject; and keep him off with artificial delays, let his necessities be never so pressing; and when we are put to it at last, it comes so hard from us, that it may be more properly said to be extorted than obtained; and not so properly the giving of a bounty, as the quitting of a man's hold upon the tug, when another is too strong for him: so that this is but doing one kindness for me, and another for himself; after he has tormented me with delays and difficulties, he grants the favour only that he may be at peace. The value of the thing itself is very much dependant on the *manner of saying or doing it*. It was a very wise saying, that a good office done harshly, and with ill-will, was like *a stony piece of bread*; it is necessary for him that is hungry to receive it, but it almost chokes him in the going down. In the bestowing of benefits, you must lay aside all pride, arrogance, and ill-natured words or looks; for an unkind word, look, or action destroys the grace of a favour. It corrupts a bounty, when it is accompanied with state, haughtiness and elation of mind in the giving of it. Some have the trick of shifting off a suitor with a point of wit, or a cavil. Of this kind was the Cynick, who begged a talent of Antigonus; *That is too much*, says he, *for a Cynick to ask*; and when he fell to a penny, *That is too little*, says he, *for a prince to give*. He might easily have compounded this controversy, by giving him a talent as from a prince, and a penny, as to a Cynick. A man must not give with his hand and deny with his looks; but bestow it with a free chearful countenance.

* *Good deeds must be accompanied with good words.*

WE should also accompany * *good deeds* with *good words*, and say, (for the purpose) *I am displeased at your bringing a recommendation; pray let there be no more of this, but come freely whenever you stand in need of my assistance; I wonder you did not come to me sooner.* When he who receives the benefit can say to himself, *What a glorious day has this been to me! Never was I so generously treated! What is it I would not do to serve this man! I could not have received so much fa-*

tisfaction from a thousand times as much done in another manner; it is then a glorious bounty. In short, let the benefit be never so considerable, the manner of conferring it is yet the noblest part. A man had better be without a benefit, than have it conferred upon him with harshness of language, countenance, or behaviour. It is far better to give a flat denial, than to keep a person in expectation; a speedy death being a great mercy, in comparison of a lingering torment. To pay long attendance for a benefit, after a promise is past, is very vexatious, let it be ever so great; and he that holds me needlessly in pain, loses two valuable things, time, and the proof of friendship. Nay, the very hint of a man's wants comes many times too late. *I would buy myself a cloak, said Socrates, if I had but money.* They who were sensible he wanted one should have prevented the very intimation of that want. We ought to consider the benevolence of the mind, and not the value of the present. *He did not give me much, but then it was freely and generously done, and as much as he could afford; he prest it upon me without asking, and watched the opportunity of doing it, and took it as an obligation upon himself.* Benefits which come slow, and with much entreating, though very great in themselves, and given with ostentation and pride, are perhaps but of little value to the receiver, it being rather an ambition than a bounty.

SOME favours are to be conferred in *private**, others in *publick*. Private benefits are the good offices we do a man who is in distress, or want, or under reproach; and these should be known to no body but the person to whom they are done. Nay, if we can possibly conceal from whence the favour came, it would be better than letting the receiver know it; for in many cases the secrecy is the principal part of the benefit. A certain good man had a friend, who was both sick and poor, and ashamed to own his condition; he privately conveyed a bag of money under his pillow, that he might seem rather to find than receive it. If I but know I give it, it does not signify whether he that receives it knows

* Some favours in private, others in publick.

whence it comes. Several people, who are in a very necessitous condition, care not to confess it. *Publick* favours, on the other hand, consist of honours, charges, the rewards of great actions, and whatever gives a man reputation in the world. In a word, a man who would acquit himself of all these obliging duties, must be wise, friendly, and well-bred; as well as good-natured, civil, and discreet.



CHAP VIII.

The Worth and Difference of Benefits.

WE have treated already of *Benefits* in general, the intention and the matter, together with the manner of bestowing them. It now comes in course, to mention something concerning the *worth* of them; which is either valued by the good they do us, or by the difficulty they save us, and has no other standard than that of a judicious respect to occasion and circumstance. Suppose I save a man from being drowned, the benefit of life is the same to him, by what means, or from what hand soever it comes: but, yet the obligation may be quite different. I may do it with safety or with hazard; with ease or inconvenience; willingly or by compulsion; upon intercession or without it: I may have a view of profit or vain-glory: I may do it by an hundred *by-ends* to myself, or in kindness to another, and the case is greatly altered every way. Two persons may part with the same sum of money, and yet the benefit be not the same. The one had it of his *own*, and it was but *little* out of a *great deal*; the other, though he stood in need of it for himself, *borrowed* it and bestowed it upon me. Two boys were sent away to bring a certain person to their master: the one of them seeks up and down for him, and returns quite weary, without being able to find him; the other goes to play at the wheel of Fortune with his companions, and by chance sees him going by, delivers his message to him, and brings

him. He deserves to be punished who found him by chance; and he who was at so much trouble without success should be rewarded for his good intention.

WE set a value upon the *matter* * in some cases, and in other cases we value the *attendance* and *trouble*. What is more valuable than life, good health, good manners and good education? and yet our physicians and tutors are paid only for the good they do in their professions. If we make a cheap purchase, it is of no consequence, provided it is a bargain; the seller does not oblige you, when no other person would give him more money for it. When a man is in a storm, what money would he not give to be set ashore? even for a house in a wilderness? a shelter from a tempest? A fire, or a morsel of meat; to a person pinched with cold or hunger? A defence from thieves, and several matters of consequence, that cost but a trifle? And yet we are sensible that the bricklayers and carpenters are paid by the day for their work, and the skipper has only his freight for our passage. Really those things which are looked upon of small consequence, prove often the greatest obligations; such as comfort under affliction, sickness, poverty, imprisonment, good advice, preventing people from committing sin, and such like things. Therefore we should think ourselves most indebted for the noblest benefits. If a physician adds friendship and care to the duty of his calling, and the tutor to the common manner of his business; in this case I should respect him as much as my nearest relations; for, to be deeply concerned for me, to sit with me, and on my account put off other patients, is shewing great friendship: and so is it friendly in my tutor, if he is at more trouble with me than the rest of my fellows. In this case it would not be sufficient to pay the one his fees, and the other his salary; for I am doubly indebted to them for their friendship. It is common when we employ the meanest mechanics, if they do their business with care and industry, to give them something more than the bare payment we agreed for: and should

we deal more meanly with the persons who preserve our life or reform our manners? He that bestows himself upon me (if he is worth receiving), bestows the greatest benefit in his power. Æschines, a poor disciple of Socrates, made this present to his master, as a matter of great consequence: he told him, *that others may have given him much, but I am the only man who has left himself nothing.* Socrates told him, *He should never repent of that gift, for he would certainly make a liberal return for it;* so that a noble mind can never want matter for generosity in the lowest situation of life: for nature has been so indulgent to us, that if we have nothing of fortune's to bestow, we may give something of our own.

* *An injury follows a benefit.*

IT sometimes happens that a benefit is followed by an * injury; which ever may be first, the last appears as one writing upon another: the latter hides the former, by preventing it from appearing, but it does not take it away entirely. In some cases they may be divided, the one rewarded and the other revenged; or compare them, to find whether I am a debtor or a creditor. You have wounded me in my brother, and obliged me in my servant; you have destroyed my father, and saved my son: In such a case I will allow as much as good-nature, piety and justice will bear; but cannot think of setting an injury against a benefit. I would pay some regard to the time; the obligation came first; and probably the one might be intended, and the other unwillingly. I would amplify the benefit, under these considerations, and lessen the injury, and let them both be extinguished; I would even forgive the injury, setting the benefit aside, but more readily after it; not that one benefit can oblige a man to bear all sorts of injuries; as there are some cases wherein we live under no obligation for a benefit, because it is absolved by the greater injury. For example, a man assists me in getting free of a law-suit, and after that commits a rape upon my daughter; that cancels the former obligation. A man assists me by lending me money, and afterwards sets my house on fire: here the creditor is turned deb-

tor, where the benefit is over-ballanced by the injury. If a man haughtily upbraid me with a good office he has done me though he did it on his own account, or for some other reason, than for my good, it removes the obligation in some degree, I am not the least obliged to the person who makes me an instrument of his own advantage. He that does me good for his own sake deserves the same return from me.

SUPPOSE a man desires a place*, which he cannot obtain, but upon the ransom of ten slaves out of the gallies: If there be *no more* than ten, they are not indebted to him

**The case of a conditional redemption.*

for redeeming them, but are obliged to him, if he might have taken ten more, and left these; and in case of an act of grace, a certain number of prisoners are to be released, their names to be drawn by lot, and I am so fortunate as to be one of that number; I am obliged partly to providence, and partly to the person who put me in a capacity of freedom. The chief benefits are those concealed in the mind, and not publickly known.

PARTICULAR obligations and common ones* differ widely; when a person lends money to my country, I am only obliged amongst others.

**Common and personal obligations.*

When the ferry-man would take no money from Plato, for crossing the river, he esteemed it as an honour done him, and said, *that Plato was in debt.* But when Plato came to be sensible that he had favoured him no more than others, he recalled his words, and said, *He could not be indebted for a benefit in common with others; what he owed with others he would pay with others.*

SOME people think that the necessity of wishing a person well is an abatement to the obligation of doing him a kindness: but

**Necessitous obligations.*

I cannot agree with them; I think the obligation greater because the good-will cannot be altered. It is one thing to say, That a man could not avoid obliging me, as he was forced to it; and another thing, that he could not quit the good intention. In the first case, I am obliged to him that imposeth the

force; and in the other I am obliged to myself. An unutterable good-will is a very great obligation; and to say Nature cannot go out of her course, does not discharge us *of what we owe to Providence*. Can he who changes his mind every moment be said to will? And can we doubt the will of the Almighty, whose nature will admit of no alteration? Must the stars quit their stations, and fall foul of each other? Must the sun stand still in the midst of his course, and heaven and earth fall again into chaos? Must a destructive fire seize the world, and the harmony of the creation be dissolved, and all nature swallowed up in a dark abyfs? Will nothing else do to convince the world of their base follies? These heavenly bodies, it is true, are made for us, partly, and whether we will or no, and we are the better for their motions and virtues: though the unalterable law of God is undoubtedly the chief cause. The Divine Will is an everlasting law, and Providence is not moved by any outward thing; an unchangeable decree; and the impossibility of change proceeds from God's intention of preservation; for he never changes. Our Heavenly Father differs greatly from our earthly one. The Almighty, before he made us, provided for us: all future events are known to him: man was not made by chance; his mind naturally aspires to the thoughts of heaven and divine mysteries, and carries him above the flights of fancy. What madness is it to condemn or under-value divine blessings, when we are not capable of enjoying any other without him!



C H A P. IX.

An honest Man cannot be outdone in Courtesy.

SOME people reckon it a generous and magnificent saying, that *It is a very great shame for a man to be outdone in courtesy*: It will not therefore be amiss to examine both the

truth of it, and the mistake. First, there can be no shame in a virtuous emulation; and, secondly, there can be no victory without crossing the cudgel, and yielding the cause. One man may have the advantages of strength and fortune, which will undoubtedly operate upon the events of good purposes, but yet without any diminution to the virtue. The good-will may be the same in both, and yet one may have the heels of the other: for it is not in a good office as in a horse-race, where he that comes first to the goal wins the prize. And even there also, success is frequently owing to chance. Where the contest is about benefits, and the one has not only a *good-will*, but *substance* to work upon, and a *power* to put the good intention in execution; and the other, without having either the *means* or the *occasion* of a requital, and only a *good will*; if he does but affectionately wish it, and endeavour it, the latter is no more overcome in courage than the hero who expires fronting his enemy, sword-in-hand, and maintains his station without flinching. For where *Fortune* is *partial*, it is enough that the *good-will* is *equal*. There are two errors in this proposition: first, to imply that a good man may be overcome, and then to imagine that any thing shameful can happen to him. All those exercises where the victory was declared by the confession of the contentent, were prohibited by the Spartans. The three hundred Fabii were never said to be *conquered*, but *slain*; nor Regulus to be *overcome*, though he was taken *prisoner* by the Carthaginians. The mind may stand firm under the greatest malice and iniquity of fortune; and yet the giver and receiver continue upon equal terms; as we reckon it a drawn battle, when two combatants are parted, though the one has lost more blood than the other. He that knows how to owe courtesy, and heartily wishes that he could requite it, is invincible: so that every man may be as grateful as he pleases. It is your happiness to give, it is my fortune that I can only receive. What advantage now has your chance over my virtue? Some men have almost philosophized themselves out of human affections; as Diogenes, who walked naked and uncon-

cerned through the midst of Alexander's treasures, and was, as well in other people's opinions as his own, even above Alexander himself, who at that time was ruler of the whole world: for there was more that the one scorned to take, than the other had in his power to give; and it is a greater generosity for a beggar to refuse money, than for a prince to bestow it. This is a surprising instance of a steady mind; and there is hardly any contending with it; but a man is never the less valiant for being overcome by an invulnerable enemy; nor the fire any thing the weaker, for not consuming an incombustible body; nor a sword ever a whit the worse for not cleaving an impenetrable rock; neither is a grateful mind overcome for want of an answerable fortune. If the two parties stand upon the same level, in point of good affection, the inequality of the things given and received signify nothing. When we follow a man as fast as we are able, it is no shame if we do not overtake him. Alexander the Great, who used to boast that he surpassed all mankind in benefits, lived to behold a poor fellow in a tub, from whom he could take nothing, and to whom he could give as little.

The most noble of presents is a wise friend.

NOR is it always necessary for a poor man to fly to the sanctuary of an invincible mind, to quit scores with the bounties of a plentiful fortune; but it frequently happens, that the returns which he cannot make in *kind* are more than supplied in *value* and *dignity*. Socrates was invited by Archelaus, a king of Macedon, to his palace; but he excused himself, as he was sensible he could not requite such a benefit. This perhaps was not *pride* in the philosopher, but *craft*; for he was afraid of being forced to accept of something which might possibly have been unworthy of him: besides that, he was a man of liberty, and loth to make himself a voluntary slave. The truth of it is, that Archelaus had more need of Socrates than Socrates had of Archelaus; for he wanted a man to teach him the art of life and death, and the skill of government, and to read to him the book of nature. Let the world

therefore judge, whether the *philosophy* of Socrates, or the *bounty* of Archeläus would have been the greater present. A wise friend is the noblest of presents, being a scarcity not easily to be met with, and most wanted where there seems to be the greatest store. The greater a man is, the more need he has of him; and the more difficulty there is both of finding and of knowing him. Nor is it to be said, *I cannot requite such a benefactor, because I have nothing*: I can give good advice; a conversation, which may both be useful and entertaining to him; freedom of discourse, without flattery; kind attention when he deliberates; and faith inviolable, where he trusts; I may deliver him from the errors of his credulity, bring him to the knowledge and love of truth, and teach him the grand art of distinguishing betwixt friends and foes.



C H A P. X.

The Question discussed, Whether a Man may not give and return a Benefit to himself?

IN several cases, a man speaks of himself as of another person; *I hate myself for that; I may thank myself for that; I am angry at myself.* This way of speaking has raised a dispute among the Stoicks, *Whether a man may not give and return a benefit to himself?* For, say they, if I may hurt myself, I may oblige myself; and, why is not that a benefit to myself which is so to another person? And why am not I as criminal in being ungrateful to myself, as if I were so to another body? The case is the same in flattery and several other vices; as on the other side, it is a point of great reputation for a man to command himself. Plato thanked Socrates for what he had *learned* of him; and why might not Socrates as well thank Plato for that which he had *taught* him? *That which you want,* says Plato, *borrow it of yourself.* And why may I not as well

give to myself as lend? If I may be angry with myself, I may thank myself; and if I chide myself, I may as well commend myself, and do myself good as well as hurt; there is the same reason of contraries. *Such a man has done himself an injury*, is a very common saying: If an injury, why not a benefit? But I say, that no man can be a debtor to himself; for the benefit must naturally precede the acknowledgment; and a debtor can no more be without a creditor, than a husband without a wife. Unless somebody give, no body can receive; and it is neither giving nor receiving, the passing of a thing from one hand to the other. What if a man should be ungrateful in the case? There is nothing lost; for he that gives it has it: and he that gives, and he that receives, are one and the same person. Now, properly speaking, no man can be said to bestow any thing upon himself; for he obeys his nature, that prompts every man to do himself all the good he can. Shall I call him liberal that gives to himself; or good-natured that pardons himself; or pitiful that is affected with his own misfortunes? That is nature to myself, which is clemency, compassion, and bounty to another. To do good to myself is a necessary thing; but a benefit is an act of free will. When a man is beset by thieves, or falls into a ditch, is he ever commended for extricating himself from them, or getting out of it? If I should allow that a man may confer a benefit upon himself, yet he cannot owe it, for he returns it the very instant he receives it. No person gives, owes, or makes a return, but to another. How can one man do that, to which two persons are requisite in so many respects? Giving and receiving must go backward and forward, betwixt two persons. If a man may give to himself, he may sell to himself: But to sell is to alienate a thing, and to translate the right of it to another; now to make a man both the giver and the receiver, is to unite two contraries. That is a benefit, which, when it is given, may possibly not be requited; but he that gives to himself, must certainly receive what he gives. Besides, that all benefits are given for the receiver's

sake, but that which a man does for himself, is for the sake of the giver.

C H A P. XI.

How far one Man may be obliged for a Benefit done to another.

WE must be very cautious in treating upon this proposition; for tho' it be both generous and natural to wish my friend well; yet, a *second-hand benefit* does not bind me any farther, than to a *second-hand gratitude*: So that a good office done to my friend may give me a good deal of pleasure, and yet not lay me under the least obligation. If any man think otherwise, I must ask him, Where it begins? and how far it extends? that it may not be boundless. Suppose the son receives a favour from a man; does it lay the father under any obligation? Why not the uncle too? the brother? the wife? the sister? the mother? the aunt? Nay, upon every person that has any kindness for him? and upon all who esteem his friends? and upon all who esteem them too? In short, upon all mankind? In this case we must have recourse, as was before observed, to the intention of the benefactor; and fix the obligation upon him unto whom the kindness was directed. If a man manures my land, or prevents my house from falling, or being burnt, it is a benefit to me, as I am the better for it, my house and land being insensible. But if he save my son's life, my son is indebted to him for the favour: I am very much pleased at it, but under no obligation to him. I am as much concerned as I ought to be, in my son's health, happiness, and welfare, and in the enjoyment of him; and I should be very unhappy if he was lost; yet it does not follow that I am under an obligation, for being either happier or less miserable, by another person's means. There are some benefits, which, although conferred upon one man, may yet work

upon others; as, suppose some person should give a poor man a sum of money for his own sake, which consequently proves the relief of the whole family; yet still the immediate receiver is the debtor for it; for the question is not, To whom it comes afterwards to be transferred, but who is the principal? And upon whom it was first bestowed? I have as great a value for my son's life as for my own; therefore, when you save his, you preserve mine also. I will acknowledge myself obliged to you in this case; that is to say, in my son's name; for in my own, and in strictness, I am not; but I am willing to make myself a voluntary debtor. Suppose he should borrow money, yet upon my paying it, it does not make it my debt. It would greatly vex me, if he was found in bed with another man's wife; yet I am not an adulterer for that. His safety gives me great pleasure; but still this good is not a benefit. A man may receive advantage from an animal, a stone, a plant; but there must be a will, an intention, to make it an obligation. You save the son, without so much as knowing the father; nay, without so much as thinking of him; and, perhaps, you would have done the same thing, even if you had hated him. In short, if you meant him a kindness, he is answerable for it; and I may enjoy the fruit of it, without being obliged by it. But if it was done for my sake, then am I accountable. Or however, upon any occasion, I am ready to do you all the kind offices imaginable; not as the return of a benefit, but as the earnest of a friendship: which you are not to challenge neither, but to entertain as an act of honour and of justice, rather than of gratitude. If my father should die in a desert, and his body be found by a stranger, and he bury it; if he did it as to my father, I am obliged to him; but if he knew not the body, and he would have done the same thing to any other body, I am no farther concerned in it, than as a piece of public humanity.

IN some cases, an unworthy person may be obliged, * for
 * *An unworthy* the sake of others; and the sottish extract
person may be o- of an antient nobility may be preferred be-

fore a better man, that is but of yesterday's standing. It is no more than reasonable to esteem the remembrance of eminent virtues. He who is not in himself illustrious, may yet be imputed so in the right of his ancestors. And there is a gratitude to be entailed upon the offspring of famous progenitors. Was not Cicero made consul upon his father's account? And did not the eminence of *one* Pompey raise and dignify the rest of his family? What was the reason that the empire of the world was given to Caligula, a man so cruel that he spilt blood as easily as if he were to drink it? The empire was not given to him, but to his father Germanicus: A braver man deserved that for him, which he could never have challenged upon his own merit. By what other means was Fabius Perficus preferred, than by the bravery of the three hundred of his family, who, in defence of the commonwealth, so generously opposed the enemy?

EVEN Providence * is favourable to the wicked posterity of an honourable race. The counsels of heaven are guided by justice, wisdom, and mercy. Some men, without any respect to their predecessors, are raised to the throne, on account of their own virtues. Others, for the sake of their ancestors, whose virtues come to be rewarded in their issues, though neglected in their life-times. And it is but equality, that our gratitude should extend as far as the influence of their heroical actions and examples.

bliged for the sake of those that are more worthy.

** The wicked posterity of an honourable race are favoured by Providence.*



C H A P. XII.

The Benefactor must have no private Views.

THE main point of the matter in view comes now under our consideration, viz. Whether the act of giving or receiving be a thing desirable in itself. There is a sect of philosophers that esteems nothing valuable which is not profitable; and so makes all virtue mercenary: An unmanly mistake, to imagine, that the hope of gain, or fear of loss, should make a man either the more or less honest. As who should say, *What shall I get by it, and I will be an honest man?* Whereas on the contrary, honesty is a thing in itself to be purchased at any rate. A man should not say, *It will be a hazard; a charge; I shall give offence, &c.* My business is to do what I ought to do: all other considerations are foreign to the office. It is my part to attend, when my duty calls me, without scrupulizing upon forms or difficulties. Shall I see an honest man at the bar, and not lend him all the assistance in my power, for fear of a court-faction? Or not assist him on the highways, when attacked by robbers, for fear of getting myself hurt? For what other reason are men generous, brave, temperate, and just, but because it carries along with it fame and a good conscience? Let a man therefore also be bountiful for the same reason. This doctrine, I am certain, will never agree with the school of Epicurus, that voluptuous and effeminate sect of philosophers: They will tell you, That Virtue is but the vassal and servant of Pleasure. No, says Epicurus, *I am not for Pleasure neither without Virtue.* But wherefore Pleasure then, say I, before Virtue? Not that the stress of the controversy lies upon the order only; for the power of it, as well as the dignity, is now under debate. It is the office of Virtue to lead, to govern, and to superintend; but the parts you have assigned it are, to submit, to follow, and to be under command. But this

signifies nothing, you will say, so long as both sides are agreed, that there can be no happiness without Virtue: *Take away that,* says Epicurus, *and I care as little for Pleasure as you do.* In short, the main point is this, whether Virtue itself be the *summum bonum*, or only the cause of it? It is not the inverting of the order that will clear this point; (though it is a very preposterous mistake, to set that first which should be last.) I am not half so much displeased at the ranging of Pleasure before Virtue, as the comparing of them, and the bringing of two opposites, and professed enemies, into any sort of competition.

THE intent of this discourse is, to support the cause of benefits; and to prove, that it is a mean and dishonourable thing, to give, for any other end, than for the sake of * giving. He that gives for any gain, profit, or any by-end, destroys the very intent of bounty; for it falls only upon those that do not want; and perverts the charitable inclination of princes and of great men, who cannot reasonably propound any such end to themselves. What does the sun get by visiting and comforting every corner of the universe? Is every thing created and made for the good of mankind, and every particular man only for the good of himself? We constantly are receiving some fresh marks of the blessings of Providence. And what design can the Almighty have upon us, who is supreme master of every thing? If he should bestow for no one's sake but his own, what would become of us poor mortals, who can make him no other return than grateful thanks? Let us therefore be liberal, and, like our heavenly Father, give to others as freely as he gives to us,

THE answer which * Epicurus will make to this will be, That God gives no benefits at all to the world, but turns his back upon it; and, without any concern for us, leaves Nature to take her course. But if there were not an almighty Ruler and Dispenser of good and evil, what is the reason that the generality of men

* Give only for
the sake of giving.

* A Providence is
denied by the Epicureans, and asserted by the Stoicks.

should have so long agreed in the paying worship to a being which can neither assist nor hear us? Some benefits are freely bestowed upon us; others are granted us upon our prayers, and we every day receive some fresh mark of the infinite mercy of God. I dare say there never was a man so insensible, as not to feel, see, and understand a Deity in the ordinary methods of nature; though several have been so ungrateful as not to own it: nor is any man so miserable as not to be a partaker in that divine bounty. Some benefits, it is true, may appear to be unequally divided; but it is no small matter yet that we possess in common; and which Nature has bestowed upon us in her very self. Whence comes every thing that we have, if God is not bountiful? From whom but Him do we enjoy all the blessings upon earth? Those innumerable delights, which please our eyes, our ears, and our understandings? Nay, even that copious matter for luxury itself? For care is taken, not only for our necessities, but likewise for our pleasure, and for the gratifying of all our senses and appetites. Such variety of food, made ready, by Nature, to our hands; so many fine rivers, which serve us both for recreation, plenty and commerce; numberless pleasant groves; fruitful and salutary plants; the vicissitudes of seasons; and, in short, the whole creation itself is subjected to mankind, for health, medicine, and dominion. We can be thankful to a friend for a few acres, or a little money: and yet what ungrateful creatures are we to the Almighty Disposer of heaven and earth, for all the great benefits we enjoy, of life, health and reason! If a man makes us a present of an house, decorated with all the beauties of nature and art, we make a mighty business of it; and yet how soon may it be levelled to the ground, by the snuff of a candle, a puff of wind, or a thousand other accidents! And is it nothing now to sleep under the canopy of heaven, where we have the globe of the earth for our place of repose, and the glories of the skies to divert our sight? Yet how unthankful are we for what we have, at the same time that we greatly value it! Whence come the comforts of light and heat, our breath, and the blood that runs

in our veins? the cattle and the fruit of the earth that feed us? Whence have we the growth of our bodies, the succession of our ages, and the faculties of our minds? So many veins of metals, quarries of marble, and other fossils? The seed of every thing is in itself, and is raised out of darkness into action and motion by the Almighty Father. Not to mention delicious provisions for the palate, exquisite perfumes, beautiful objects, the delightful charms of music, and all the other pleasing entertainments, which are thrown in over and above, to the common necessities of our being.

WE must ascribe all this to * Nature, ** God and Nature* says Epicurus. And pray why not to God? *are one and the* Are they not one and the same power, *same power.* working in the whole and every part of it?

Or, if you call him the Almighty Jupiter, Thunderer, the Creator and Preserver of us all, it comes to the same issue: Some will express him under the notion of Fate; which is only a connection of causes, and himself the uppermost and original, upon which all the rest are founded. The several *functions* of the Creator are represented by the Stoicks under various *appellations*. When they speak of him as the Father, and the universal source of all Beings, they call him Bacchus: they denote him to be *invincible* and *indefatigable* under the name of Hercules: and they call him Mercury, when they contemplate him in the *wisdom, reason, order, and proportion* of his proceedings: So that they never fail of finding him, under what name soever they couch their meaning. If a man should borrow a sum of money of me, and say that he owes it to another person, he may change the name, but not his creditor. As justice, integrity, prudence, fortitude, frugality, are all of them the goods of one and the same mind, so that which soever of them pleases us, we cannot distinctly say, That it is this, or that, but the mind.

BUT, not to carry this digression too far, that which God himself does, we are certain is well done; and we are no less certain, that he neither wants, expects, nor receives any thing

**The divine bounty expects no return.*

in return * for all the benefits he bestows upon us: So that the end of a benefit ought to be the advantage of the receiver; and that must be our scope, without any by-regard to ourselves. It is objected to us the singular caution we prescribe in the choice of the person; for it were a madness, we say, for an husbandman to sow the sand: which if true, say they, you have an eye upon profit, as well in giving as in plowing and sowing. And then they say again, That, if the conferring of a benefit were desirable in itself, it would have no dependence upon the choice of the man; for let us give it when, how, or wheresoever we please, it would still be a benefit. This affects not our assertion in the least; for the person, the matter, the manner, and the time, are circumstances absolutely necessary to the reason of the action; there must be a right judgment in all respects to make it a benefit. It is my duty, to be true to a trust, and yet there may be a time, or a place, wherein I would make little difference betwixt the renouncing of it, and the delivering of it up; and the same rule holds in benefits; I will neither render the one, nor bestow the other to the damage of the receiver. A wicked man will risque every thing to do an injury; and to compass his revenge; and shall not an honest man venture as far to do a good office? All benefits must be gratuitous; a merchant sells me corn that prevents me and my family from starving, but he sold it for his interest, as well as I bought it for mine; therefore I am nothing indebted to him for it. He that gives for profit gives to himself; as a physician or lawyer gives advice for a fee, and only makes use of me for his own ends; as a grazier fattens his cattle, to bring them to a better market. This is more properly the carrying on of a trade than the cultivating of a generous commerce. This for that is rather an exchange than a benefit; and he deserves to be cheated that gives any thing in expectation of a return. What then should a man honourably propound? Not *profit* sure; that is *vulgar* and *mechanick*; and he can never be grateful that does not despise it. And then

for *glory*, it is a mighty matter indeed for a man to boast of doing his duty. We are to *give*, if it were only to avoid *not giving*: If any thing comes from it, it is clear gain; and at worst, there is nothing lost; besides, one benefit well placed, makes amends for a thousand miscarriages; it is not that I would exclude the benefactor neither, for being the better for a good office he does for another. Some people do us a kindness only for their own sakes; others for ours; and some again for both. He that does it for me in common with himself, if he had a prospect upon both in the doing of it, I am obliged to him for it, and very glad that he had a share in it. Nay, if it did not give me pleasure, that what was of infinite service to me, was so likewise to himself, I should be very ungrateful.

Now to speak of gratitude and ingratitude; no person was ever so debased as not to approve of one, and abhor the other; the one deserving to be esteemed, and the other hated. We are quite out of patience when we hear of an ungrateful person, and detest him; we exclaim, *That inhuman rascal, to be guilty of so black an action*; but never say, *That thoughtless fool, for omitting a virtue which might be profitable to him*. This discovers plainly the sense we have of both the impulse of reason and conscience. Epicurus imagines God is without power and arms; above fear, and not to be feared. He places him between the orbs, lonely and idle, out of the reach of mortals, and neither heeding our prayers nor minding our affairs; and pays him only such regard as is generally shewn to parents. If a man should now ask him, Why there should be any respect at all, if we are not obliged to him? or why should there be that great reverence to his fortuitous atoms? He would say, That it is on account of their majesty and wonderful nature, and not for any expectation from them. So that by his own confession a thing may be desirable for its value. He adds, gratitude is a virtue which is generally attended with profit; and what virtue is there with-

* *All men love gratitude and detest the reverse.*

out profit? Yet the virtue is to be esteemed for itself, and not for the profit received from it only: Undoubtedly gratitude for benefits received is the most effectual method to receive greater ones; and by being grateful to one friend we encourage many; but these advantages fall in by the by; and were I certain that doing friendly offices would ruin me, I would still pursue them. He that pays attention to a friend in time of sickness, in hopes to receive a legacy: I would look upon him like a raven taking an advantage of a weak sheep, to pick out the eyes of it. When we consider the sincerity of an action, without paying any regard to the advantage we receive from it otherwise, we never give with so much judgment or care; for our understandings are corrupted with pleasure, hope, and fear.



C H A P. XIII.

In many Cases a Man may be reminded of a Benefit, but it is never to be upbraided, and seldom to be challenged.

WERE the world as honest and wise as it should be, there would be no necessity for caution or precept for our behaviour in our several stations and duties; as both giver and receiver would act properly of their own accord: the one would be generous, and the other thankful; and the only way to put a man in mind of one service, would be to repeat it. But as the case is, we must take other methods, and study the ease and relief of mankind.

** Several kinds of ingratitude.*

As there are many sorts of * ungrateful people, so there must be different methods of treating them, either by skill, advice, admonition, or reproof, according to the temper of the person, and the degree of the offence, providing the good of the receivers be the principal study. There is a kind of ingratitude which may be cured, and a kind which cannot be cured; there

is a proud, a deceitful, a disclaiming, a heedless, a forgetful, a slothful, a spiteful ingratitude; and the application must be suited to the person we have to deal with. A gentle nature may be reclaimed by advice, reproof, or authority: in such a case, a father, a husband, a friend may be of service. There are some indolent, lazy people, who seem asleep all their lives, and must be pinched hard to rouse them. These people are betwixt grateful and ungrateful; they will neither deny an obligation, nor return it, and only want to be pushed on. I will use all my endeavours to prevent a man from ill-doing, but particularly a friend, and especially from doing ill to me. I will remind him of his obligations by new benefits: If that does not succeed, I will next give him good advice: If that has no effect, I will proceed to reproof; and if every method fails, I shall set him aside, and leave him in his ingratitude, without making him dislike me; for I will never spend time in disputing with any person in that case.

BEING industrious to oblige * strikes * *A desire to oblige.*
 upon the memory and conscience of an ungrateful person, till he becomes grateful: If the first good office will not have any effect, try a second, and a third. No person can be so unthankful, but at some time he will be made sensible on some occasion, either through shame or example. Even wild beasts, lions, tygers, are gained by kind usage: and it is common for one obligation to draw on another; it is not natural for a man to leave his own work unfinished. *I will go through with it, as I have helped him so far.* So that over and above the pleasure and virtue of obliging, one good office invites another. This of all hints is perhaps the most generous and effectual.

IN some cases * it may be more plain, * *In some cases as in that of Julius Cæsar, when he was a man may be rehearing a cause; the defendant finding minded of a benefit.* himself at a loss, Sir, says he, *do you remember when you commanded in Spain, that you strained your ankle, and a soldier lent you his cloak for a cushion, upon the top of a*

craggy rock, under the shade of a little tree, in the heat of the day? I do remember it extremely well, replied Cæsar; and when I was ready to die with thirst, an honest fellow brought me a drink of water in his helmet. Does Cæsar think, says the soldier, that he would remember that man and that helmet again if he saw them? Cæsar a little displeased, answered, Perhaps I might know the man, but not the helmet; but to what purpose is this story? You are not the man. Pardon me, Sir, replied the soldier, I am that very man; but it is very like Cæsar should not know me again, for I have been trepanned since that, and have lost an eye at the battle of Munda, where that helmet also had the honour to be cleft with a Spanish blade. Cæsar took it as it was intended; and it was a prudent and genteel manner of refreshing his memory. But Tiberius would not have taken this so well: for when he was addressed thus by an old acquaintance, *You remember, Cæsar,*——*No,* replied Cæsar, *I do not remember what I was.* Now, with him, it was better to be forgotten than remembered; for an old friend was as bad as an informer. It is a common thing for men to hate the authors of their preferment, as the witnesses of the mean condition they were formerly in.

SOME people are well enough disposed to be grateful*, but they cannot hit upon it without a prompter: they resemble school-boys, who have treacherous memories; it is but helping them here and there with a word, when they stick, and they will go through with their talk: *they must be taught to be thankful, and it is a fair step if we can but bring them to be willing, and only offer at it. We neglect some benefits, and are not willing to remember others. He who disowns an obligation is very ungrateful; and so is he that dissembles it, or to his power, does not requite it; but he who forgets it is worse than all the rest. The others may be revived by conscience, or occasion, but the very memory of it is lost in this. Those eyes which cannot endure the light are weak, but those that cannot see it are stark

* If some people had a prompter they would be grateful.

blind. It vexes me to hear people say, *Alas! poor man, he has forgotten it*: as if that were an excuse for ingratitude, which is the very reason of his not remembering it: for if he were not ungrateful, he would not be forgetful, and lay that out of the way, which should be always uppermost, and in view. He that thinks of requiting a benefit as he ought, is not in the least danger of forgetting it. Some benefits are so great that we cannot but remember them; but those which are less in value and more in number, we frequently let slip out of our minds. We confess readily enough, *That such a man has been the making of us*; so long as we are in possession of the benefit he has done us; but new appetites deface old kindnesses, and we carry our prospect forward to something more, without considering what we have already obtained. All that we have received we no longer remember, but look forward to what may yet come. A benefit is soon forgot, when both out of sight and of use.

SOME people, when they do a good office, are continually boasting † of it to all companies. A foolish and a dangerous vanity; of a doubtful friend to make a certain enemy: For these reproaches and contempts will set every one a talking; and people will conclude, that these things would never be, if there were not something very extraordinary in the bottom of it. When it once comes to that, every calumny fastens to it, and the most incredible falsehood will, in some part or other of it, pass for a truth. Our great mistake is this, that we generally make the most of what we give, and the least of what we receive; but we should do quite the reverse. *It might have been more, but he had several to oblige; he could not well spare any more; he will make it up some other time*, are the common excuses. So far should we be from publishing our bounties, that we should not even hear them mentioned, without sweetening the matter; as, *If it were in my power to do him the least service, I should be very glad of it, for I owe him far more than that comes to*. And

† *There must be no upbraiding of benefits.*

this too with all truth and humanity, not having the least air of a compliment. One of Cæsar's friends having saved a man of quality in the triumviral proscription, was frequently upbraiding him, and telling him, *If it had not been me, friend, you would have been undone: I beg that you would have done with that,* answered the gentleman, *or else leave me in the condition I was in when you found me: I gratefully acknowledge that you saved my life; but it is worse than death to be thus constantly upbraided with it: It looks as if you had saved me only for a spectacle. I would fain forget the misfortune that I was once a prisoner, without being daily led in triumph.*

† *Some bounties are bestowed with insolence.*

OH! the folly and pride of a great fortune, that delights in † excesses, disgraces every thing he does, and turns benefits into injuries! Upon such terms as these, who would receive any thing from it? The higher it raises us the more fordid it makes us. Whatsoever it gives it corrupts. What is there in it that should thus puff us up? By what magic is it that we are so transformed, that we do no longer know ourselves? Is it impossible for greatness to be liberal without insolence? The benefits that we receive from our superiors are then welcome, when they come with an open hand, and so as to prevent our necessities. It does not make the benefit the greater, by raising a great noise and bustle about it; on the contrary, it makes that odious to us which would be otherwise delightful, and the benefactor is greatly lessened by the ostentation of his good deeds. If at any time a man begged money from Tiberius, he would refer him to the senate, where all the petitioners were to deliver up the names of their creditors. His end perhaps was, to deter men from asking, by exposing the condition of their fortunes to an examination. But it was however a benefit, turned into a reprehension; and he made a reproach of a bounty.

BUT it is not † enough to forbear reproaching a man with a benefit; for there are some that

† *In what case a man may be reminded of a benefit.*

will not so much as allow it to be challenged. For, say they, a good man will make a return of himself, and a wicked man, not though he be asked: It is a kind of injury to be too quick with the latter; for, to call upon him too soon, reproaches him, as if he would not have done it otherwise. Nor would I recall a benefit from any man, so as to force it; but, only to receive it. If I let him alone, I make myself guilty of his ingratitude; and spoil him for want of plain dealing. A disobedient son is reclaimed by a father; a dissolute husband by a wife; and one friend excites the languishing kindness of another. What numbers of men are lost, for want of being reminded! So long as I am pressed, I will rather desire a favour than so much as take any notice of a requital; but if my liberty, my family, or my country be at stake, my zeal and indignation shall over-rule my modesty, and the world shall then understand, that I have done all I could, not to stand in need of an ungrateful man. And, in conclusion, the necessity of receiving a benefit shall overcome the shame of recalling it. In some cases, it is not only allowable to remind the receiver of a benefit, but even frequently both parties are the better by it.



C H A P. XIV.

In what Manner a wicked Man ought to be requited, or obliged.

A Wicked man is quite incapable of some benefits; others are bestowed upon him for secondary reasons, and not for his own sake. There are likewise certain offices of humanity, which are only allowed him as he is a man, regardless either of virtue or vice. To pass over the first point; the second must be handled carefully, and with distinction, and not without some seeming exceptions to the general rule: as first, there is no *choice* or *intention* in the case, but it is a good office done him for some *by-interest*, or by *chance*: secondly,

there is no *judgment* in it neither, for it is to a *wicked man*. In short, it is not properly a benefit, without these circumstances, at least not to him. I rescue a friend from thieves, and the other escapes for company; I discharge a friend's debt, and because they were both in a bond, the other comes off too. The third is very extensive, and varies according to the degree of generosity on the one side, and of wickedness on the other. Some benefactors will do more than they are bound to do: and some men are so lewd, that it is dangerous to do them the least good; no not so much as by way of return, or requital.

† *How an ungrateful man ought to be obliged.*

If the bad, as well as the good, † are to be sharers of the benefactor's bounty, we ought to distinguish betwixt a *personal* and a *common benefit*; betwixt what is given for *company*, and what for *merit*. Secondly, we know the person to be ungrateful or not, and can reasonably conclude, that this vice is *incurable*. Thirdly, we must consider how far we are obliged by promise. The first two points are cleared both in one. We cannot justify any particular kindness for one whom we conclude to be a hopelessly wicked man: so that the force of the promise is the single point in the question. I am to blame if I knowingly make a promise of a good office to a wicked or ungrateful man; and I am to blame nevertheless, if I did it otherwise: but must yet make it good (under due qualifications) because I promised it; that is to say, matters continuing in the same state, for no man is answerable for accidents. I will rise at such an hour, I will dine at such a place; but I will do neither of them, if I fall sick, or it be tempestuous. I promise to assist a friend in a quarrel, or to plead his cause; but when I come into the field, or court, it happens to be my father, or brother: I promise to accompany him in a journey; but there is no travelling on the road for robbers; my son is fallen sick, or my spouse in labour: These circumstances are sufficient to discharge me; for a promise is void in its own nature, when contrary to law or duty. A wise man's counsels

are certain, but events are not so. And yet if I have made a rash promise, I will in some degree punish the temerity of making it, with the damage of keeping it, unless it turn very much to my shame or detriment; and then I will be my own confessor in the point, and rather be once guilty of denying, than always of giving. A benefit is quite different from a debt: It is one thing to oblige an unworthy person, and another to trust a bad pay-master: the one is a bad man, and the other only an ill manager.

PHILIP king of Macedon took great notice of a brave fellow in the army, and shewed him the respect he had for him. This foldier being at sea, was cast away on a coast where an hospitable man took him up, almost expiring, carried him to his house, and maintained him a month at his own expence, till he was quite well, and provided him at parting with a *viaticum*. The soldier made many fair promises of making requitals for all this civility at his return, when he had the honour of seeing his master again. When he goes to court, he gives Philip an account of the wreck, without mentioning the man who had saved his life, and solicits the estate of his preserver. Philip, like many other princes in the time of war, who give without thinking, granted his request, reflecting at the same time, how impossible it was to please all the people who would ask favours of him. When the generous man had all taken from him, he was not so smooth-tongued as to return his majesty thanks for not taking his person also, but wrote a frank spirited letter to the king, relating the whole story. Philip was so enraged at the soldier's ingratitude, that he instantly commanded the estate to be restored to the former owner of it, and the ungrateful fellow to be branded with a hot iron for an example to others. In this case, was it right for the king to keep his promise? in the first place, he was not indebted to the soldier; and in the second place, it would have been injuring the person who had behaved so friendly; and in the last place, a very bad example to people in general: it would have been little less than interdiction of fire and wa-

ter to the wretched, to inflict such a penalty upon giving them relief. There should always be an exception; as *if things stand as they were, if I can, if I may.*

** The case of an obligation from a person who betrays his country afterwards.*

SHOULD it be my fate to receive * a benefit from a person who betrays his country afterwards, I should think myself obliged to him for such a requital as might be consistent with my public duty. I would not assist him with money or credit, to levy or pay soldiers, nor arms; but I would not refuse to gratify him at my own expence with such curiosities as might satisfy him one way, and not hurt him another; I would not do any thing that might assist or be an advantage to his party. But with regard to a benefactor, that afterwards became mine and my country's enemy, and also an enemy to all mankind, what should I do in this case? I must consider the difference betwixt the wickedness of a man, and the cruelty of a beast; betwixt a particular or limited passion; and a sanguinary rage, that reaches even to the danger and destruction of human society. In the first place I would clear myself of him, and have nothing more to do with him; but if he once comes to delight in blood, and be outrageous and covetous, to invent torments, and take delight in them, the law of nature frees me from such an obligation. But this is a wickedness so seldom met with, that it may be set down amongst the wonders of nature. We must therefore confine our subject to such men as we detest with horror; such men as we frequently see in camps, courts and seats of justice: I will return what I have received from such wicked monsters, without making any advantage of their wickedness.

‡ Even to the wicked, Providence is merciful.

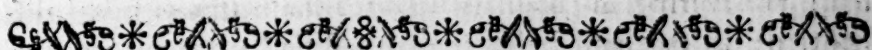
THOUGH we daily abuse ‡ the goodness of the Almighty, he does not withdraw his merciful hand. How many wretches enjoy the comfort of sight, and all the blessings of providence notwithstanding their ingratitude for such benefits! We exclaim, Such a knave is better used than I am!

And even extend our complaints to providence. How many good men have their crops blasted, while the wicked enjoy plenty! we complain such a person has used me very ill. In this case, what should we do, but what the Almighty himself has done? we see. Providence does not withhold her benefits, even from the ungrateful, though they question from whence they come. The wisdom of heaven does every thing for the good of the world, and the gifts of nature are granted promiscuously to men; and it is the will of the Almighty, that the wicked shall fare the better for the good, than the good fare the worse for the wicked. Indeed a wise prince may bestow honours upon the deserving; but in dealing a public dole, there is no respect paid to the manners of the man; but a traitor, or thief, will share in common with a good and an honest person. If a good and a wicked man sail both in one ship, the wind must be equally favourable to both. The good and wicked share equally of the common benefits of laws, privileges, communities, letters, and medicines; nor was it ever known for a man to suppress a sovereign remedy, to prevent a wicked person from being cured with it. Cities are built for both good and wicked, and the same remedy effects both alike. In such cases we must estimate the people; there is a great difference between chusing a man, and not excluding him: the law is free to the rebellious as well as the obedient: and there are some benefits, that could not be allowed to any, if every person had not them also. The sun was made for the convenience of the world, and for the providential order of the seasons, and not for me alone; yet my private obligation for it is the same. He who is determined not to oblige the ungrateful and wicked, must determine to oblige nobody, for we are all ungrateful, none of us are good.

WE have been all this time talking how far a wicked man may be obliged, and the Stoicks tell us at last, that he cannot be obliged at all: for they conclude that he is in-

A wicked man cannot receive a benefit.

capable of any good, and consequently of receiving any benefit. One advantage he has, he cannot be ungrateful, if he cannot be obliged: for if he does not receive favours, he need not return any. A good man and an ungrateful man are a contrast: so that there is no ingratitude at this rate. A wicked person's mind is compared to a vitiated stomach; the best nourishment turns to the disease, and he corrupts all he receives. But allowing this to be the case, a wicked man may still be so far obliged, as to appear ungrateful, if he makes no return for benefits received: for though the benefit be not perfect, yet it is something like it. There are goods of mind, body, and fortune. Fools and wicked men are incapable of the former; the rest they may be allowed. You will say, why should I call a person ungrateful, for not returning what I do not allow to be a benefit? I answer, that if it is received as a benefit, and not returned in that light, it is ungrateful; for that which passes for an obligation amongst wicked men, is an obligation confined upon them; and they may pay each other in their own coin; the money is current, whether it be gold or leather, if it be authorized. Cleanthes carries it still further: he that is backward in doing a kind office, says he, though it be no benefit, would have acted the same if it had been one; and is as guilty as a thief is who has set his booty, and is ready armed and mounted, with a design to seize it, though the blood is not yet drawn. Wickedness is formed in the heart, and the matter of truth is only the discovery and putting it in execution. Though a wicked person cannot either bestow or receive a benefit, because he has no inclination to do good, and when virtue takes possession of him, he is no longer wicked; yet we generally call it one, as when we call a man illiterate, that is not learned, or a person naked who is not well clothed, though the one can read, and the other has cloaths on.



C H A P. XV.

A View of the Parts and Duties of a Benefactor.

THE three chief points in the question of benefits, are, first, a proper *choice* in the *object*; secondly, in the *manner* of our generosity; and, thirdly, a thankful *happiness* in the *manner* of our expressing it. But there are still other considerations, which are incumbent upon the benefactor, and deserve a place in this discourse.

IT is not sufficient to do a favour, and with a good grace too, unless we repeat it, without *murmuring or upbraiding. It is a common case to charge the receiver with ingratitude, when the indiscretion and levity of the giver is generally more blameable; for all circumstances should be duly considered, to complete the action. We meet with some ungrateful people, but we are the cause of more being so by our forwardness, change of temper, and reproaches. And this is the case: we intendedly give most to those who are able to give much again. We give to the proud and covetous, that will never be thankful, for their desires are never to be satisfied. People always wish to be better than they are; a tribune would be a prætor; a prætor a consul; without reflecting upon what he was, but wishing for greater honour. People are still considering, *shall I lose this or that benefit?* If it be lost, the error lies in bestowing it ill; for it is as good as consecrated, if rightly placed; if we are deceived in another person, let us not be deceived in ourselves too. A good man will mend the matter, and imagine the best; he will say, *probably he has forgot it; perhaps he could not, he may yet make a return.* A creditor who waits with patience, may in time make a good paymaster of a bad

* *Confer obligations cheerfully, without repining or upbraiding.*

one; persevering in goodness will get the better of a bad disposition; as care and industry will make a barren soil fruitful. A person may still enjoy the satisfaction of having done a good office, though the man it be done to proves ungrateful.

* *We must continue to do good.*

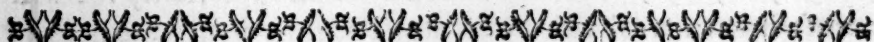
IF we see other people wicked, * it is no reason that we must be so too; we must not be inhuman, because others are ungrateful. It is no merit to give and to lose; but to continue doing so is an indication of a noble mind: and in reality the other's is the greater loss; the one loses his benefit, but the other loses himself. The sun shines upon the sacrilegious and profane, as well as the righteous. We see people disappointed daily in their wives, and yet matrimony goes on: he that loses one battle, hazards another. The sailor goes to sea again after a wreck. A noble mind does not consider the profit he is to receive from a good office, but has a satisfaction in doing his duty. Though the world is wicked, we should continue to do good, even among wicked men. It is better never to receive a kindness, rather than never to confer one: though the sin of not making a return for a benefit is the *greatest*, that of not bestowing one is the *earliest*. We cannot have a better example than God Almighty himself, who is continually bestowing his mercies upon us, not only for our necessities, but also for our pleasures; as fruits and seasons, sun-shine and rain, veins of metal and water: all these blessings are enjoyed by the wicked as well as the good; and for no other purpose but the common benefit of receivers. How then can we who receive all things for nothing from the divine Providence, be mercenary one to another? It is common to say, *I gave such a person so much money, I wish I had thrown it into the fire*: yet the banker, after having had a bad security, ventures again; and the merchant, after a piracy. A man who will do no good after he meets with a disappointment, must do nothing at all. We raise a new house after one is burned; and put the plough into the ground after an unfruitful year. Can there be greater obligations than those which parents confer

upon their children? But were they to leave them in their infancy, it would be all to no purpose. Benefits, like grain, must be followed from the seed to the harvest. I will leave no place for ingratitude. I will follow and surround the receiver with benefits; so that, let him turn which way he will, his benefactor shall be present, even while he endeavours to avoid his own memory. I will give to one man, because he asks for it; to another, because he does not desire it; to a third, because he is a good man; and to a fourth, because he is wicked. I will requite a good man, and bestow a good office upon a bad man; the one because it is my duty, the other, that I may owe him nothing. It is disagreeable to hear a person complain that he has met with an unthankful man: if he had met with no more than one, he has been either very careful or very fortunate. But even care is not sufficient; for there is no way to avoid losing a benefit, but by not bestowing it; and to omit my duty to prevent another from abusing it. It is *another's* fault if he is ungrateful, but it is *mine* if I do not give him an opportunity to be grateful. I will confer obligations on many men, to find one grateful. Were we to do nothing for fear it did not succeed, all business would be at an end. I will endeavour to believe every thing, before I give a man over, and do all in my power to avoid losing both a friend and a good office. I do not know but *he may take the obligation in a wrong light; it may have escaped his memory by hurry of business, or he may have missed his opportunity*: I will excuse human weakness by saying, That one man's memory is not sufficient for every thing; it is limited, and can only hold so much; and when full, must let some escape, to take in something else; and the last benefit is always most in our memory. In youth we forget the obligations of our infancy; and when men, those of our youth. If nothing will prevail, let him keep what he has; but let him avoid returning evil for good, and making it a dangerous affair for a man to do his duty. I would as soon assist a beggarly spendthrift with mo-

ney, as do a good office to such a man. Be the case as it will, reproach will never have a good effect upon an ungrateful person; if he is hardened in his wickedness, he will pay no attention to it, and if he is not, it turns a doubtful modesty into depraved impudence: besides, he will take an opportunity to pick a quarrel with them.

* *No time should be lost in doing a benefit.*

A BENEFACTOR * is neither to upbraid a benefit, nor put it off: the one is hateful, the other tiresome. We must not hold men in hand, as physicians and surgeons do their patients, keeping them longer in pain and fear than is necessary, to make the cure appear of more consequence. A generous man gives readily, and receives in the same manner, but never exacts. He is happy in the return, and judges favourably of it, let it be what it will, and is contented with thanks alone. It is more trouble with some people to get the benefit after it is promised, than a promise of it; there must be such a number of friends made in the case. One is desired to solicit another; and he must be solicited to move a third; and a fourth must be besought to receive it; so that the author has the smallest share in the benefit. When it comes free, it is welcome; and especially if it be of such a nature as to give pleasure both at receiving and afterwards; which will be the case if we do nothing for another person which would not be acceptable to ourselves.



CHAP. XVI.

In what Manner the Receiver should behave himself.

THERE are certain rules in common between the receiver and the giver: we must do both chearfully, that the giver may receive the fruit of his benefit in the very act of bestowing it. It gives one great satisfaction to see a friend pleas-

ed; but far more to *make* him so. The intention of the one is to be suited to the intention of the other; and there must be an emulation betwixt them, whether shall be most obliging. Let the one say, that he has received a benefit, and let the other persuade himself that he has not returned it. Let the one say, *I am paid*, and the other, *I am yet in your debt*; let the benefactor acquit the receiver, and the receiver bind himself. The frankness of the discharge makes the obligation the greater. It is in *conversation* as in a *tennis-court*; benefits are to be tost like balls; the longer the rest, the better are the gamesters. The giver, in some respect, has the odds, because, (as in a race) he starts first, and the other must use his utmost efforts to overtake him. The return must be larger than the first obligation, to come up to it; and it is a kind of ingratitude, not to return it with interest. In money-matters, it is a common thing to pay a debt out of course, and before it is due; but we account ourselves to owe nothing for a good office; whereas the benefit increases by delay. That man who can neither see, hear, smell, feel, nor taste, is undoubtedly in a very wretched condition: but he is far more so who, wanting a sense of benefits, loses the greatest comfort in nature, in the happiness of giving and receiving them. He who takes a benefit as it is meant, is in the right: for the benefactor has then his end, and his only end, when the receiver is grateful.

THE more glorious part, in appearance, is that of the giver; but the receiver * has undoubtedly the harder game to play, in many regards. I would not accept of a benefit from every person, especially those upon whom I would not bestow one. For why should not I scorn to receive a benefit where I am ashamed to owe it? And I would yet be more tender too, where I receive than where I give; for it is a torment to be in debt where one has no mind to pay; as it is the greatest delight imaginable to be engaged by a friend, for whom I should yet have a kindness, if I were never so

* *The receiver has the harder game to play.*

much disobliged. It is a pain to an honest man, and a generous mind, to lie under a duty of affection against inclination. I speak not here of wise men, who love to do what they ought to do; that have their passions at command; that prescribe laws to themselves, and keep them when they have done; but of men in a state of imperfection, that perhaps are very willing to be honest, and yet are over-born by the contumacy of their affections. We should therefore be careful to whom we become obliged; and I would be yet much stricter in the choice of a creditor for benefits than for money. In the one case, it is but paying what I had, and the debt is discharged: in the other, I do not only owe more, but when I have paid that, I am still in arrear: and this law is the very foundation of friendship. I will suppose myself in prison, and a wicked villain offers to lay down a sum of money for my redemption. First, shall I make use of the money or no? Secondly, if I do, what return shall I make him for it? To the first point, I will take it; but only as a debt, not as a benefit, that shall ever tie me to a friendship with him: And, secondly, my acknowledgment shall be only correspondent to such an obligation. It is a school-question, Whether or no Brutus, that thought Cæsar not fit to live, (and put himself at the head of a conspiracy against him) could honestly have received his life from Cæsar, if he had fallen into Cæsar's power, without examining what reason moved him to that action? How great a man soever he was in other cases, he was undoubtedly out in this, and very much below the dignity of his profession. For a Stoick to fear the name of a king, when yet monarchy is the best state of government; or there to hope for liberty, where so great rewards are offered both for tyrants and their slaves; for him to imagine, ever to bring the laws to their former state, where so many thousand lives had been lost in the contest, not so much whether they should serve or no, but who should be their master: He must certainly have been very much out in the nature and reason of things, to imagine, that another would not start up in his stead, when there was yet a

Tarquin found, after so many kings that were destroyed, either by sword or thunder: And yet the resolution is, that he might have received it, but not as a benefit; for if that was the case, any man may take my life that pleases.

FABIUS Persicus, a man who * led a very infamous life, sent a considerable sum of money to Græcinus Julius, (who was afterwards put to death by the order of Caligula, out of a pure malice to his virtue) as a contribution towards the expence of plays and other public entertainments; but Julius refused it; and some of his friends, who had an eye upon the present, asked him, Why he did not accept of it? *Do you imagine,* answered he, *that I will take money, where I would not so much as take a glass of wine?* Some time after this, a much greater sum was sent him by one Rebilus, a man of the same character, for the same purpose as the former present. *I must beg to be excused,* says he to the messenger, *for I would not accept of any thing from Persicus.*

A CERTAIN Pythagorean * having bargained with a shoe-maker for a pair of shoes, and going a few days after to pay for them, found the shop shut up. After having knocked a long time at the door, he was thus addressed by a man who was passing in the street: *You may knock there for ever, friend, before you make the man you want hear, for he is dead. And when our friends are no more, we hear no longer any news of them; but yours, who are to live again, will shift well enough* (alluding to the Pythagorean doctrine of transmigration). As soon as the philosopher heard this, he went away, very well content for saving his money: At last his conscience began to check him, and he thus reflected as he went along: *Though the man be dead to others, he is alive to thee; pay him what thou art indebted to him.* Thus saying, he returned back again, and thrust the money through the chink of the door into the shop. Whatever we owe, it is our part to find where

to pay it; for the debt is still the same, whether the creditor be good or bad.

† *A forced benefit.*

IF a tyrant or a superior force † me to accept a benefit, and it would be dangerous to refuse; it is rather obeying than receiving, and the necessity destroys the choice. The way to know what I have a mind to do, is to leave me at liberty, whether I will do it or no; but it is yet a benefit if a man does me a kindness in spite of my teeth; as it is none, if I do any man good contrary to my inclination. A man may both hate, and yet receive a benefit at the same time; the money is never the worse because a fool refuses to take it, who is not acquainted with coins. It matters not how the thing be taken, provided it be good for the receiver, and so intended. Nay, the receiver may be obliged, and yet be ignorant of it: but there can be no benefit, which is unknown to the giver. Neither will I, upon any terms, receive a benefit from a worthy person that may do him a mischief: it is the part of an enemy, to save himself, by doing another man harm.

† *Keep a grateful mind.*

HOWEVER, let us be sure to keep a grateful mind †. It is not enough to say, What requital shall a slave offer to his patron, or a poor man to his prince; when it is the glory of gratitude, that it depends only upon the good will. In what manner shall I be grateful to the man who saves my life, gives me liberty, which is more than life, defends my fame, or delivers me from beggary? I will receive, cherish, and rejoice in the benefit. Take it kindly, and it is required: not that the debt itself is discharged, but it is nevertheless a discharge of the conscience. I will yet distinguish betwixt the debtor that is undone by fire, or thieves, and another that becomes insolvent by expences upon gaming and whores: nor do I take this gratitude for a payment; but I presume there is no danger of being arrested for such a debt.

WE ought to be cheerful † and ready in
† *In the returning* the return of benefits, but not pressing.

There is as much greatness of mind in being indebted for a favour, as in doing one: an unseasonable return is as blameable as no return at all. A man who is hasty in returning benefits, appears tired of being indebted to his friend. It is commendable to shew a readiness to return a good office, but to do it as a discharge is quite different, and appears like throwing off a tiresome burden. A benefactor should, without considering the opinion of the world, say *when* he would chuse to receive it; if a man is conscious that he is right, he may be satisfied; he cannot be mistaken in himself, but another person may. A person who is very anxious to return a benefit, imagines the other is the same to receive it. If it be more agreeable to him that we should keep it, why do we refuse, and presume to dispose of his treasure, who may call it in, or let it lie as he pleases? It is as blameable to receive what I should not, as not to give what I should: the giver has the right of chusing his own time for receiving.

SOME people have an ambition both in † receiving and conferring benefits, which is ridiculous. The same rule answers both † *In either giving or receiving benefits there must be no pride.* fides, as in the case of a father and a son, husband and wife, friend and acquaintance, where the duties are known and common. There are some people who will not receive a benefit publicly, and thank you privately; there must be no witnesses to it. This is not so much a scruple of modesty, as a kind of ingratitude, and denying the obligation. Some men receive favours with so much indifference, that it might be suspected the obligation lay on the other side: as who should say, *Well, I will take it, as it must be so.* Others in such a careless manner, as if they scarcely knew any thing of the matter; whereas you should rather enlarge it, by saying, *How many have been obliged by it! there never was so kind; so seasonable a favour.* Furnius gained very much upon Augustus by a speech upon getting

his father's forgiveness for siding with Antony: *This grace, says he, is the only injury Caesar ever did me: for it has put me under a necessity of living and dying ungrateful.* It is more safe to affront some people than to oblige them; the more deserving a man is, he is the worse spoken of; as if shewing an open hatred to their benefactors argued that they were under no obligations. Some people are so morose and ill-tempered, that an obligation, or return, offends them, which is a discouragement both to kindness and gratitude. The not conferring a benefit, or receiving one, are equally a mistake. A person who refuses a fresh obligation, appears to be offended with a former one: and yet sometimes I would neither receive nor return a benefit, if I could.



C H A P. XVII.

Of Gratitude.

TO preach up gratitude, is pleading the cause both of God and man; we can neither be religious nor sociable without it. There is a great pleasure in the thoughts of it, as well as in the action itself; when I can say to myself, *I esteem my benefactor; what would I not do to serve him, if I had it in my power?* Suppose I could not make a return, the intention would give me pleasure. A man is not the worse pilot because he is on dry ground; less brave because his hands are bound; less an artist because he has not his tools with him; or less a musician if he wants his instruments. If I have only a desire to be grateful, I am so. If I am under the hand of the executioner; if I be upon the wheel; or am burnt limb by limb, and my whole body dropping into the flames, a good conscience will support me under all difficulties, even in death itself: nay, it is comfortable even when death approaches us: for when we come to that point, how attentive are we

to recollect all our benefactors, that we may set our minds in order, and leave the world in a fair manner! We cannot enjoy reputation, peace, or safety, if we are ungrateful: and it is not the less desirable, because it is attended with many advantageous benefits. If the sun, moon, and stars had no other business than to pass over our heads, without any effect upon our minds or bodies, health, fruits or seasons, a man could hardly lift up his eyes towards the heavens without veneration and surprize, to see so many millions of brilliant lights, and to observe their courses and revolutions, even without any regard to the common good of the world. But when it is considered, that providence and nature are at work with the wonderful force and operation of their influences and motions while we sleep, we must acknowledge that their ornament is the smallest part of their value, and that they are more to be respected for their virtue than grandeur. Their chief use and intent is matter of life and necessity; though they may appear more considerable to us for their beauty and majesty. And so it is in the case of gratitude; we esteem it more for secondary ends than for itself alone.

It is impossible to be grateful without *Opposition must*
contemning those things which put the *not prevent us*
common people out of their senses. We *from being grate-*
must be banished, beggared, exposed to re- *ful.*
proaches, lay down our lives; nay, loyalty
often suffers the punishment due to rebellion, and treason is
rewarded as fidelity. As the benefits of it are great and many,
so are the dangers, which must be the case in all other virtues,
more or less: and it would be hard if this should be more painful
and fruitless: so that if we should go on smoothly, we must
determine to make our passage to it, even thro' the most rugged
and thorny paths, and still keep grateful, for the sake of virtue,
above any interest we could receive; gratitude both gains us new
friends, and preserves old ones. We should not fish for one benefit
with another; and expect to get more by bestowing a little: or to
oblige for any sort of expe-

dience, but because it is right that I should do so, and because I love it to such a degree, that I could not be grateful, without appearing the contrary, and could not return a benefit without having it supposed I did an injury; still I would be grateful, in spite of infamy itself. I esteem that man who ventures his fame to preserve the conscience of an honest man; the one is imaginary, and the other real. He cannot be called grateful, who immediately upon returning one benefit, expects another. A person who is grateful through fear, or for profit, is like a woman who is honest on account of reputation only.

* *Gratitude is a plain, easy and a cheap virtue.*

* As gratitude is a plain, easy and cheap virtue, so it is also a necessary one: so cheap, that a covetous man may be grateful without expence; and so easy, that the sluggard may be so without labour. And yet there is a proper time, place, and occasion, when a benefit had better be disowned than returned.

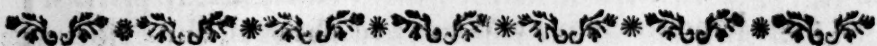
* *Gratitude for benefits received is one thing, and returning them another.*

WE are to understand that gratitude * for a favour is a different affair from returning it: a good intention is sufficient in one case, but the effect is necessary in the other. Though a patient dies under the hand of a physician, yet if he has done his best, he is not to be blamed; the same with a general of the army, if a battle is lost; and an advocate, if his client lose the cause; in this case, the one acquits himself, though the other receives no benefit from it. That man who is always ready and willing, and using his endeavours to return a good office, is a grateful man, though he fails in his intentions, and does more than a person who makes an immediate return, without any trouble to himself. If I sell my estate to ransom a friend who is taken prisoner; I go to sea in tempestuous weather, or on a coast where pirates are troublesome; if before I arrive my friend is at liberty, my friendship should be as much esteemed, as if I had redeemed him; and the case would have been the same, if I had been taken and robbed myself. A

person's countenance will discover whether he is grateful or not; an honest man is confident and chearful, and enjoys true friendship; a grateful man is *always* pleased with the good he has *done*, and an unthankful person is only *once* pleased with what he has *received*. An opportunity of doing a good office is a benefit of itself to a worthy man; he will never be ungrateful who attends to the present, and remembers what is past. But of this case no body can judge; for a man may be grateful, without making a return, and ungrateful with it. We should put the most favourable construction upon every thing which bears a doubt: a person who has an inclination to be quarrelsome, will make exceptions at words and looks. For my part I intend to be just to all; when I cast up my accounts, and see what I owe, and to whom, I will make returns to each as I find it convenient; I will be grateful to God, and every person I have been obliged to, even those whom my friends have been obliged to. I must in honour be grateful for what I have received: and if it be not yet full, it is some pleasure still, that I may hope for more. For the requital of a favour, there must be virtue, fortune, means, and occasion.

As it is possible for a man * to be *over-righteous*, why may not a person also be *over-thankful*? it is not uncommon to screw up justice to the pitch of an injury. There is a troublesome excess, very near ingratitude, and not easy to be distinguished; but that there is a good intention at the foundation of it, however disordered, (for it is effectually but kindness out of the wits) we shall talk of it under the title of Gratitude Mistaken.

* A man may be *over-thankful* as well as *over-righteous*.



C H A P. XVIII.

Gratitude Mistaken.

THERE is a sort of fantastical ingratitude in refusing a kind office, because we would not be obligated for it; and something related to that nicety of honour on the other side, of being too grateful; only differently situated, and the most excusable ingratitude of the two. Some people, by way of kindness, wish mischief to their benefactors, that they may have it in their power to relieve them. Those people with each other beggared, banished, or diseased, like extravagant lovers, who take it for a proof of their regard, to have an opportunity of assisting them. Where is the difference between such wishing and cursing, such kindness and deadly hatred? you will say, that the intention is good, but misapplied. If such a person is in my power, or in the hands of his enemies, creditors or the common people, and nobody but myself have it in their power to rescue him; let his life, liberty, and character lie all at stake, and nobody but myself able to assist him; and for what reason? because I have been obliged to him, and would return the obligation. If it is gratitude to the man you would requite, to wish him a jail, chains, slavery, war and poverty, what do you call ingratitude? Besides, this manner of proceeding is in itself wicked, hasty, and unseasonable; for a person who moves too fast is as blameable as he who does not move at all; (not to mention the injustice) for if I had not been obliged, I would not have wished it. There is a time when benefits are neither to be received nor requited. To insist on returning a favour when I do not desire it, is ungenteel, and more so, to oblige me to receive it. How severe would it be, to demand a requital, who is so ready to return it! To wish a person in distress that I may have it in my power to relieve him, is wishing him to be wretched: to wish he

may be in need of assistance from any body, is *against him*; or to wish he may stand in need of me, is *-serving myself*; so that the business is not so much a charity to my friend, as the cancelling of a bond: nay, it is half the desire of an enemy, to wish a person in distress, to have the pleasure of relieving him; let me rather wish he may be happy and powerful, and I under obligations to him. We are naturally compassionate, merciful and humane; may gratitude excite us to be more so.

AN honest man is not to be guilty of a † crime, to make way for a good office; as † *We must not do ill, that good may follow it.* if a pilot wish for a storm, that he may shew his skill; or a general wish his army routed, that he may shew himself a great commander in regaining the day. This is like throwing a man into the river, to take him out again; to cure an illness or a wound is certainly an obligation; but to be the occasion of that illness or wound, on purpose to cure it, is obstinate ingratitude. To an enemy it would be cruel, and much more so to a friend; for the doing him a kindness will not balance the hurt of putting him in a situation to require assistance. Let it be rather a scar than a wound; but to have neither would be best. Rome would have been little obliged to Scipio, if he had lengthened the Punic war, with an intention that he might finish it at last; or to the Decii, for dying for their country, if they had first brought it to the extremity of requiring their devotion. It may be a commendable contemplation, but a bad wish. Æneas could never have been surnamed the Pious, if he had desired to see his country ruined, with an intention of having the honour to take his father out of the flames. It is a shame for a physician to irritate a distemper, and put his patient to pain, to gain credit by the cure. If a person should openly imprecate captivity, poverty, danger or fear, upon a man who has been serviceable to him, would he not be condemned by the whole world? And where is the difference? the one is an open declaration, the other a private wish. Rutilius, in his exile, was told for his comfort, there would soon be a civil war,

which would bring all banished men home again. He answered, *God forbid, it would give me more pleasure to have my country blush for my banishment, than mourn for my return.* There is more honour in being indebted chearfully, than to pay dishonestly. It is the desire of an enemy to take a town, that he may preserve it, and to be victorious that he may forgive; but the cruelty comes before the mercy; besides, it is injuring both God and man, for the man must be first afflicted by *heaven*, to be assisted by *me*. By which means we impose the cruelty upon God, and take the mercy to ourselves; which at best is but a curse, which makes way for a blessing; the wish alone is hurtful; and if it does not succeed, it is because heaven has not heard our prayers; and if it has the desired effect, the fear alone is a torment: it is more desirable to have a firm and unshaken security. A desire to have it in your power to oblige me is friendly, if I should ever have occasion for it; but it is cruel to wish me wretched, that I may need your assistance. It is much kinder and humane to wish I may never want the occasion of obliging, nor the means of doing it, nor have reason to repent of what I have done.



C H A P. XIX.

Of Ingratitude.

OF all crimes, ingratitude is the most inexcusable in others, and unpardonable in ourselves. It is in the greatest degree impious; it obliges us to fight against our children, and our altars. There ever was, and will be, criminals of all kinds; as murderers, tyrants, traitors, adulterers, thieves, and sacrilegious people; but there is scarcely a notorious crime without a mixture of ingratitude. It destroys the pillars of society, and disunites mankind, and so far is this great wickedness from surprising us, that thankfulness would be the greatest wonder. Men are prevented from it by industry, expence

business, slothfulness, or diverted from it by lust, ambition, envy, levity, pride, fear, rashness; nay, by the shame of owning what they have received. All this time the ungrateful man can say nothing in defence of himself; for neither pains nor fortune are necessary to discharge this duty; besides, the inward vexation and anxiety when a man's conscience makes his own reflexions disagreeable to him.

WHEN we rail against the ungrateful, ¶ *We are all un-*
we include all mankind ¶; even those *thankful.*
who complain are ungrateful. I do not
speak of those who do not stick up to the rules of virtue only,
but mankind in general is degenerated and lost. We live
unthankfully in this world, and go murmuring and straggling
out of it, displeased with our lot; whereas on the contrary we
should be thankful for the blessings we have enjoyed, and be
satisfied with what Providence has bestowed upon us. A lit-
tle more time may prolong our lives, but not render them hap-
pier; and when it pleases the Supreme Being to call us out
of this world, we must readily obey his will; and yet all this
time we are quarreling with the world for what we find in
ourselves, and are still more ungrateful to heaven than to
each other. What benefit can be great to the man who de-
spises the favours of his Maker? We desire to be strong as ele-
phants, swift as bucks, and light as birds; we complain that
we have not the sight of eagles, the sagacity of dogs, the age
of ravens; nay, are dissatisfied that we are mortal, and have
not the knowledge of futurity. We are disobliged because
we are not gods upon earth, without thinking of the comforts
we enjoy in the situation we are placed. We overtake the
swiftest creatures, and subdue the strongest; we out-wit the
craftiest, and reclaim the fiercest; we are within one degree
of heaven, and yet are not contented with that, and would e-
ven wish to be any other creature: we are not pleased because
we cannot draw the united excellencies of all other creatures
into ourselves. We should rather be grateful to that Goodness
which has subjected the whole creation to our use.

† *Causes of Ingratitude.* SELF-CONCEIT, pride, envy, covetousness, &c. are the principal † causes of ingratitude. It is a common saying, *Indeed he did this or that for me, but it was so little, or too late, that I had as well not have had it: if I had not got it, some other person must; it was no disadvantage to him.* Indeed our ingratitude is so great, that he who gives us all we possess, if he reserves any thing to himself, we think he does us an injury. The disappointment of Julius Cæsar's insatiable companions cost him his life; yet he kept nothing to himself, but the liberty of disposing of it. There is no benefit so great, but it is in the power of malice to lessen it; nor any so small, but a good interpretation may enlarge it. No man who views a benefit on the wrong side, or makes a bad handle of a kind office, can ever be grateful. A covetous person is naturally ungrateful, because he is never satisfied with what he possesses, but wishes for more. Some people pretend that it is not in their power to make a proper return, and others who have a proud heart, are ashamed to return an obligation, because it is owning that they have received one.

† *It is inhuman not to return good for good; and to return evil for good is devilish.*

It is inhuman † not to return one benefit for another, but it is devilish to return evil for good. There are too many people of this sort, who the more they owe the more they hate. Nothing can be more dangerous than to oblige these kind of people: they wish the creditor out of the way, when they are conscious of not paying the debt. The shame of an abused benefit is a mortal hatred. When people are wanting favours, how they will cringe, and be all submission, with promises never to forget the obligation; but after it is granted, the tone is altered, and we hear no more of the favour; it is by degrees quite forgotten. While we want a favour, nothing is so dear to us; nor any thing cheaper, when we have received it. A man may as well refuse to return a sum of money which was intrusted with him, as not to make a return for a good office,

without asking it. When we forget the benefit, we also forget the author of it. People generally consider their own interest; one man is grateful for his convenience, another is unthankful for the same reason.

THE complaint of † ingratitude reaches all sorts of people; some are ungrateful to their country, and their country no less ungrateful to others. The son wishes for the death of his father, the husband for that of his wife, &c.

† *There are unthankful governors, as well as unthankful men.*

BUT how can gratitude be expected in an age where there are many people craving, all ready to receive and none to give? in an age licenced for all wickedness and vanity, as lust, gluttony, covetousness, pride, envy, impudence, sloth, contumacy, levity, rashness, fear, private discord, and publick evils, vain and fruitless wishes, empty confidence, shameless impieties, sickly affections, rapines, and the violation of every thing sacred and profane: obligations are pursued with poison and sword; benefits are turned into crimes; and that blood seditionously spilt, for which every honest man should expose his own. Those who should be the preservers of their country, are the destroyers of it; the sword gives the law, and mercenaries take up arms against their masters. Among these turbulent and unruly motions, we cannot hope to find honest or good faith, which is the greatest of all wishes. A conquered city is a lively image of human life; there is neither mercy, religion, nor modesty; and we may well forget our benefits, if we forget our lives. There are numerous examples of ungrateful people, and likewise of ungrateful governments. Certainly Catiline was ungrateful, when his malice was not satisfied with mastering his country, but he aimed at the total destruction of it, by calling in an inveterate enemy from beyond the Alps, to satisfy their long-thought of revenge, by sacrificing the lives of so many noble Romans as might appease the ghosts of the slaughtered Gauls. Marius too was ungrateful, who, when raised from a common soldier to a counsel, gave up the world

for civil bloodshed and massacres, and was himself the sign for execution: every man whom he met in the streets, and did not stretch out his hand to him, was murdered. Sylla likewise was ungrateful, who when he had swam in human blood to the gates of the city, carried his outrage into it, and most cruelly cut two whole legions to pieces, not only after the victory, but after quarter was perfidiously given them. Good heavens! that such a man should escape not only with impunity, but even receive a reward for such villany! Pompey was ungrateful too, who after three consulships, three triumphs, and numerous honours, usurped before his time, split the common wealth into three parts, and brought it to such a pass, that they could not hope for safety, but by slavery. Only,* forsooth, to abate the envy of his power, he took other partners with him into the government, as if that which was not lawful for any one, might have been allowable for more; dividing and distributing the provinces, and breaking all into a triumvirate, reserving still two parts of the three in his own family. And was not Cæsar ungrateful also? though, to give him his due, he did not break his word: he was merciful in his victories, and never slew any man cowardly: let us therefore forgive each other. Only one word more for the shame of ungrateful governments, and then we shall have done. Was not Cicero exiled and plundered? Camillus banished? and Scipio dismissed? but all this is nothing to those who are so foolish, as to dispute even the goodness of heaven, which, without having the least view of our making any return, continues loading even the most unthankful and repining with benefits.



C H A P. XX.

There can be no Law against Ingratitude.

ONE would imagine that nature had sufficiently provided against ingratitude, without need of any other law, by making it so dangerous to itself, and so detestable to other people. Every ungrateful man is his own enemy, and it seems superfluous to force a man to be kind to himself, and to follow his own inclinations. Human nature is more distracted and divided by this vice than by any other. We can neither be happy nor safe without the exercise and the commerce of mutual offices; for it is society alone that secures us: take us one by one, and we are a prey even to brutes, as well as to one another; nature has brought us into the world naked and defenceless; we have not the paws or the teeth of bears and lions to make ourselves terrible: but by the two blessings of reason and union, we secure and defend ourselves against violence and fortune. Man by this is rendered master of all creatures, otherwise he would hardly be a match for the weakest of them. We are comforted by this in sickness, in age, in misery, in pains, and in the most grievous misfortunes. If mankind had not these blessings, they would soon be destroyed. There is indeed no law established against this atrocious crime; but yet we cannot say that it remains unpunished, for there certainly cannot be a greater penalty than the publick hatred; besides, we lose the most valuable blessing of life, in the not bestowing and receiving of benefits. Ingratitude would discredit the obligation, if it were to be punished by a law; for a benefit is not to be lent, but given: and if we have no return at all, there is no just cause of complaint: for if there were any danger in being ungrateful, gratitude would be no virtue. The severest punishments are inflicted on those who are guilty of rebellion, murder, and sacrilege; but ingratitude is punished no where

but in the schools; all farther pains and afflictions being wholly remitted to Divine Justice. And, if people may be judged of by their countenances, the ungrateful man is never without a canker at his heart; his mind and aspect is sad and solicitous: whereas the other is ever chearful and mild.

‡ *There is neither
nor can be any
law against ingra-
titude.*

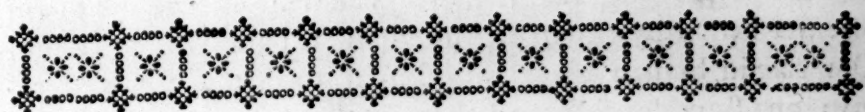
As there are no laws ‡ extant against ingratitude; so it is impossible to contrive any that shall reach it in every circumstance. If it were actionable, there would not be courts enough in the world to try the causes in. There can be no appointing a day for the requiting of benefits, as for the payment of money; nor any estimate upon the benefits themselves; but the whole matter rests in the conscience of both parties: and there are such various degrees of it, that the same rule will never serve all. Beside that, to proportion it, as the benefit is greater or less, will be both impracticable and without reason. My life may be saved by one good turn; my freedom by another, or perhaps my very soul: How is it possible for any law to suit a punishment to an ingratitude, under these differing degrees? We cannot say in benefits as in bonds, *Pay what you owe*. How shall a man pay life, health, credit, security, in *kind*? There can be no set rule to bound that infinite variety of cases, which are more properly the subject of humanity and religion, than of law and public justice. There would likewise be disputes about the benefit itself; which must totally depend upon the courtesy of the judge; for no law imaginable can set it forth. An estate is *given* me by one man; and a sword *lent* me by another, which preserves my life. Nay, the very same thing done different ways alters the quality of the obligation. The case is greatly altered by a look, a word, or a tone. In what manner shall we judge then, and determine a matter which does not depend upon the fact itself, but upon the force and intention of it? Some things are reckoned benefits, not for their value, but because we desire them. And there are far more valuable offices which we do not reckon upon at all. If ingratitude were lia-

ble to a law, we must never give but before witnesses, which would destroy the dignity of the benefit. And then the punishment must either be equal, where the crimes are unequal, or else it must be unrighteous: so that blood must answer for blood. He who is ungrateful for my saving his life, must forfeit his own. And what can be more inhuman, than that benefits should conclude in sanguinary events. My life is saved by a person, and I am ungrateful for it: Shall I be punished in my purse? That is too little; if it be less than the benefit, it is unjust, and it must be capital to be made equal to it. There are moreover certain privileges granted to parents that can never be reduced to a common rule: their injuries may be cognizable, but not their benefits: the diversity of cases is too large and intricate, to be brought within the prospect of a law: so that it is far more equitable to punish none, than to punish all alike. What if a man follows a good office with an injury; whether or no shall this quit scores? or who shall compare them, and weigh the one against the other? There is another thing yet, which perhaps we do not dream of: not one man would escape, and yet every man would expect to be his own judge. In a word, we are all ungrateful; and the number does not only take away the shame, but authorizes and protects the wickedness.

SOME people are of opinion, that there should be a law against ingratitude; for, say they, it is common for one city to upbraid another, and to claim that of posterity which was bestowed upon their ancestors: but this is only clamour without reason. Others think it a discouragement to good offices, if men shall not be made answerable for them: but I say on the other side, that no man would accept of a benefit on those terms. He that gives, is prompted to it by goodness of mind, and the generosity of the action is lessened by the caution; for it is his desire that the receiver should please himself, and owe no more than he thinks fit. But, what if this might occasion fewer benefits, so long as they would be franker? Nor is there any hurt in putting a check upon rashness and profu-

sion: In answer to this; men will be careful enough whom they oblige, without a law: and it is impossible for a judge ever to set us right in it; or indeed any thing else, but the faith of the receiver. By this means the honour of a benefit is preserved, which is otherwise prophaned, when it comes to be mercenary, and made matter of contention. We have no need of any unnecessary provocations to make us wrangle, we are ready enough of ourselves. In my opinion, it would be well if monies might pass upon the same conditions with other benefits; and the payment remitted to the conscience, without formalizing upon bills and securities: but human wisdom has rather advised with convenience, than virtue; and chosen rather to *force* honesty, than *expect* it. There must be bonds, witnesses, &c. for every paultry sum of money; which is just a plain confession of fraud and wickedness; when more credit is given to our seals than to our minds; and caution taken lest he that has received the money should deny it. There is therefore no other difference bewixt the benefactor and an usurer, but that there is nobody stands bound in the case of the benefactor.





S E N E C A

O F A

H A P P Y L I F E.

C H A P. I.

Of a Happy Life, and in what it consists.

OTHING is more desired by mankind than a happy life, and yet very few know in what that happiness consists. We live however in a blind and eager pursuit of it; and the more progress we make in a wrong way, the farther we are from our journey's end. Let us therefore in the first place consider, *What it is we would desire to have;* and secondly, *how we may obtain it with the greatest facility.* If we be right, we shall daily find how much we improve, and if we follow the cry or the track of people who are out of the way, we must expect to be misled, and to continue our days in wandering and error: For which reason, we should take along with us a skilful guide. This journey is quite different from others, where the highway brings us to our desired place; or if we should happen to lose our way, where the inhabitants might set us right again: But, on the contrary, the common road is here the most dangerous,

and the people misguide us rather than help us. Let us therefore not be led by example, but conduct ourselves by reason. Our case in human life is very similar to that of a routed army; one stumbles first, and then another falls upon him, and so they follow one upon the neck of another, till the whole field comes to be but one heap of miscarriages. And the mischief is, *that the number of the multitude carries it against truth and justice*, so that we must leave the crowd, if we would be happy; for the question of a *happy life* is not to be decided by *vote*: nay, so far from it, that plurality of voices is still an argument of the wrong; the common people find it easier to believe, than to judge, and content themselves with what is usual; never examining whether it be good or no. By the *common people* is intended *the man of title*, as well as the *common mechanic*; for I distinguish them by the mind, which is the proper judge of the man, not by the eye. Worldly happiness, I know, makes the head giddy; but when a man comes to himself again, he will confess, *That he wishes every thing undone that he has done*; and that *the things he prayed for were worse than those he feared*.

‡ *Real happiness.* THE real happiness of life, is to be ‡ free from perturbations; to understand our duties towards God and man; to enjoy the present, without any anxious dependence upon the future: not to amuse ourselves with either hopes or fears, but to be content with what we have, which is abundantly sufficient; for he that is so wants nothing. The greatest blessings of mankind are within us, and within our reach; but we shut our eyes, and like people in the dark, we fall foul upon the very thing we search for, without finding it. *Tranquillity is a certain equality of mind, which no condition of fortune can either exalt or depress.* Nothing can make it less, for it is the state of human perfection: It raises us as high as we can go, and makes every man his own supporter; whereas he may fall, who is borne up by any thing else. He that judges aright, and perseveres in it, enjoys a perpetual calm: he takes a true prospect of things; he ob-

serves an order, measure, a decorum in all his actions: he has a benevolence in his nature; he squares his life according to reason; and draws to himself love and admiration. Without a certain, and an unchangeable judgment, all the rest is but fluctuation. When a man is steady in his resolution, he is undoubtedly in the right. Liberty and serenity of mind must necessarily ensue upon the mastering of those things which either allure or affright us; when, instead of those flashy pleasures, (which even at the best, are both vain and hurtful together) we shall find ourselves possessed of everlasting and transporting joys. It must be a *sound mind* that makes a *happy* man; there must be a constancy in all conditions; a care for worldly things, but without trouble; and such an indifferency for the bounties of fortune, that we may live contentedly either with them or without them. There must be neither repining nor quarrelling, nor sloth, nor fear; for it makes a discord in a man's life. The joy of a wise man is uninterrupted; he is chearful and serene in every condition, and at all seasons. This noble disposition is born within him, therefore it will never leave him. It is a solicitous life, that is egged on with the hope of any thing, though never so open and easy; nay, though a man should never suffer any kind of disappointment. I do not speak this, either as a bar to the fair enjoyment of lawful pleasures, or to the gentle flatteries of reasonable expectations: but, on the contrary, I would have men to be always in good humour; provided that it arises from their own souls, and be cherished in their own breasts. Other delights are trivial; they may smooth the brow, but they do not fill and affect the heart. Real joy is a serene and sober motion; and they who take *laughing* for *rejoicing* are greatly deceived: The seat of it is within, and there is no chearfulness like the resolution of a brave mind, that has fortune under its feet. He that can look death in the face, and bid it welcome; open his door to poverty, and bridle his appetites; this is the man whom Providence has established in the possession of inviolable delights. The pleasures of the vulgar are ungrounded, thin,

and superficial; but the other are solid and eternal. As the *body* itself is rather a *necessary thing* than a *great*, so the comforts of it are but temporary and vain; beside, that without extraordinary moderation, their end is only pain and repentance. Whereas, a peaceful conscience, honest thoughts, virtuous actions, and an indifference for casual events, are blessings without end, satiety, or measure. This consummated state of felicity is only a submission to the dictates of right nature: Wisdom and virtue is the foundation of it: together with the knowledge of what we ought to do, and the conformity of the will to that knowledge.



CHAP. II.

Wisdom and Virtue are the Foundation of Human Happiness; and first of Wisdom.

AS we reckon *wisdom* and *virtue* to be the foundation of *human happiness*, we shall treat upon these two points, in order as they lie. First then of *wisdom*; and not in the latitude of its various operations, but only as it has a regard to good life, and the happiness of mankind.

What *wisdom* is. WISDOM † is a right understanding; a faculty of discerning good from evil; what is to be chosen, and what rejected, a judgment grounded upon the value of things, and not the common opinion of them; an equality of force, and a strength of resolution. It sets a watch over our words and deeds, it takes up with the contemplation of the works of nature; and makes us invincible, by either good or evil fortune. It is large and spacious, and requires a great deal of room to work in; it ransacks heaven and earth; it has for its object, things past, and to come; transitory and eternal. It examines all the circumstances of time; *what it is, when it began, and how long it will continue*:

and so for the mind; whence it came, whence it is, when it begins, how long it lasts, whether or no it passes from one form to another, or serves only one, and wanders when it leaves us; where it abides in the state of separation, and what the action of it is; what use it makes of its liberty; whether or no it retains the memory of things past, and comes to the knowledge of itself. It is the habit of a perfect mind, and the perfection of humanity raised as high as nature can carry it. It differs from philosophy, as avarice and money: the one desires, and the other is desired; the one is the effect and the reward of the other. To be wise is the use of wisdom, as seeing is the use of eyes, and well-speaking the use of eloquence. He that is perfectly wise is perfectly happy; nay, the very beginning of wisdom makes life easy to us. To know all this is not sufficient, unless we print it in our minds by daily meditation, and so bring a *good-will* to a *good-habit*. We must also practise what we preach: for philosophy is not a subject for popular ostentation; nor does it rest in words, but in things: It is not an entertainment taken up for delight, or to give a taste to our leisure; but it fashions the mind, governs our actions, tells us what we are to do, and what not. It sits at the helm, and guides us through all hazards: nay, we cannot be safe without it, for every hour gives us an occasion to make use of it: It informs us in all the duties of life, piety to our parents, faith to our friends, charity to the miserable, judgment in counsel; it gives us *peace*, by *dreading nothing*, and *riches*, by *coveting nothing*.

A WISE man is not prevented from doing his duty in any condition of † life. He *tempers* his fortune if it be good, and *masters* it if it be † A wise man bad: if he has an estate, he will exercise *does his duty in* his virtue in plenty; if none, in poverty; *all conditions.* if he cannot do it in his country, he will do it in banishment; if he has no command, he will do the office of a common soldier. Some people have the skill of taming the wildest beasts: they will make an elephant kneel to his keeper, a lion embrace him, and a tiger kiss him. This

is the case of a wise man in the extremest difficulties; let them be never so terrible in themselves, when they come to him once, they are perfectly tame. They who ascribe the invention of agriculture, navigation, architecture, &c. to wise men, may perhaps be in the right, that they were invented by wise men; but they were not invented by wise men as *wise men*; for wisdom does not teach our fingers, but our minds: fiddling and dancing, arms and fortifications, were the works of luxury and discord; but wisdom instructs us in the way of nature, and in the arts of unity and concord; not in the instruments, but in the government of life; nor to make us live only, but to live happily. She teaches us what things are good, what evil, and what only appear so; and to distinguish betwixt true greatness and tumour, she clears our minds of dross and vanity: she exalts our minds to heaven, and carries them down to hell. She discourses the nature of the soul; the powers and faculties of it; the first principles of things; the order of Providence: She exalts us from things terrestrial, to things celestial; and receives the truth of all: She searches nature; gives laws to life; and tells us, *That it signifies nothing to know God, unless we obey him*: She looks upon all accidents as acts of providence; sets a true value upon things; delivers us from opinions, and condemns all pleasures that are attended with repentance. She allows nothing to be good that will not be so for ever; no man to be happy, but he that needs no other happiness than what he has within himself. This is the happiness of human life; a happiness that can neither be corrupted nor extinguished: it enquires into the nature of the heavens, the influence of the stars; how far they operate upon our minds and bodies; which thoughts, though they do not form our manners, yet they raise and dispose us for glorious things.

† *Right reason is the perfection of human nature.*

EVERY one acknowledges, That *right reason* † is the perfection of human nature; and wisdom only the dictate of it. The greatness that arises from it is solid and

immoveable; the resolutions of wisdom being free, absolute, and constant; whereas folly is never long pleased with the same thing, but still shifting of counsels, and sick of itself. There can be no happiness without constancy and prudence; for the wise man is to write without blot; and what he likes once he approves for ever: He admits of nothing that is either evil or slippery; but marches without staggering or stumbling, and is never surprized. He lives always true and steady to himself, and whatsoever befalls him, this great artificer of both fortunes turns to advantage. He that demurs, and hesitates, is not yet composed: but wheresoever virtue interposes upon the main, there must be concord and content in the parts. For all virtues are in agreement, as well as vices are at variance. A wise man, in what condition soever he is, will be still happy, for he subjects all things to himself, because he subjects himself to reason, and governs his actions by counsel, not by fashion. He is not moved with the utmost violences of fortune, nor with the extremities of fire and sword; whereas a fool is afraid of his own shadow, and surprized at ill accidents, as if they were all levelled at him. He does nothing unwillingly, for whatever he finds necessary, he makes it his choice. He propounds to himself the certain scope and end of human life: he follows that which conduces to it, and avoids that which hinders it. Whatever his lot be, he is content with it, without wishing for what he has not; though he would rather abound than want. The great business of his life, like that of nature, is performed without tumult, or noise: He neither fears danger nor provokes it; but it is his caution, not any want of courage; for he looks upon captivity, wounds and chains only as lymphatical and false terrors. He pretends not to compleat whatever he undertakes; but to do that well which he does. Arts are but the servants, wisdom commands; and where the matter fails, the workman is not to blame. He is cautious in doubtful cases, temperate in prosperity, and resolute in adversity; still making the best of every condition, and improving all occasions to make them

ferviceable to his fate. Some accidents there are, which I confess may affect him, but not overthrow him; as bodily pains, loss of children and friends; the ruin and desolation of a man's country. One must be made of iron, not to be sensible of these calamities; and beside, if one were not to *feel* them, there would be no virtue in *bearing* them.

§ *Three degrees of proficients in wisdom.*

IN the school of wisdom §, there are *three degrees of proficients*. The first are those who come within the sight of it but not up to it: they have learned what they ought to do, but they have not put their knowledge in practice: they are past the danger of a relapse, but they have still the grudges of a disease, though they be out of the danger of it. By a disease, I understand an obstinacy in evil, or an ill habit, which makes us over-eager upon things which are either not much to be desired, or not at all. A second sort are those who have subjected their appetites for a season, but are yet in fear of falling back. A third sort are those who are clear of many vices, but not of all. They are not covetous, but perhaps they are passionate; not lustful, but perchance ambitious; they are firm enough in some cases, but weak in others; there are several who despise death, and yet shrink at pain. There are diversities in wise men, but no inequalities; one is more affable; another more ready; a third, a better speaker; but the felicity of them all is equal. It is in this as in heavenly bodies; there is a certain state in greatness.

A WISE man ‡ may have occasion for
‡ *In some cases, a wise man may need advice.* advice in some cases in domestic affairs, as of a physician, or an attorney: but in greater matters, the blessing of wise men rests in the joy they take in the communication of their virtues. Were there nothing else in it, a man would apply himself to wisdom, because it settles him in an uninterrupted peace of mind.



C H A P. III.

Without Virtue there can be no Happiness.

THE only immortal thing which belongs to mortality is virtue, that perfect good, the only compliment of a happy life: it is the knowledge both of itself and others; it is true greatness of mind, not to be dejected with bad fortune, nor elevated with good; it is sociable, free, steady, without fear, gentle, peaceable in itself, full of inexpressible pleasure, and is esteemed for itself alone. A man may be a good governor, a good physician, a good grammarian, and yet not a good man. All outward appearances are only accessaries; for the seat of it is a holy and pure mind, consisting of a conformity of actions, which cannot be expected while our passions distract us. Yet a person may be allowed to change colour and countenance, and bear such impressions as are a kind of natural force upon the body, though not under the dominion of the mind: But all this time his judgment must be steady, he shall act with resolution, and not be divided between the motions of his body and mind. It is not an immaterial affair, I know, whether a man lies upon his bed at ease, or is tortured upon a wheel; and yet the state of ease may be the worst, if enjoyed with infamy, and the torment preferable, if we suffer with honour. It is the *virtue* of the action, and not the action itself, which makes it good or bad; he that is led in triumph may be greater than his conqueror. When we come to set more value upon our flesh than our honesty, we are lost; but I would not run into dangers and inconveniencies except where the man and the brute come in competition: and in this case, rather than forfeit my faith, reason, or credit, I will run all hazards. To have tender parents, dutiful children, and to live under a just and well-ordered government, are great

blessings. Now, would it not grieve a virtuous man to see his children slaughtered, his father reduced to slavery, and his country over-run by a cruel enemy? The simple loss of a blessing is very different from having it succeeded by a great mischief over and above. The loss of health is followed with sickness; and the loss of sight with blindness; but in the loss of children and friends it is not so; virtue fills the mind, and removes the desire of what we have not. If the fountain is safe, what matters it whether the water be stopped or not? Does a great number of friends make a man wiser, or does the loss of them make him more foolish? So he is neither more happy nor miserable. Grief, pain, or short life, are accessions which have no effect upon virtue. It does not consist in the things we do, but in the action. Infamy, poverty, or a despicable body, cannot obscure the beauty of virtue; it will shine through all oppositions, and he who observes nearly the state of the wicked man, will discover the canker at his heart, through all the dazzling splendour of fortune and greatness. We shall then perceive how *childish* it is to fix our minds upon mean and trifling things. Where is the difference between *old men* and *children*, but the one deals in *paintings* and *statues*, the other in *babies*? So that men are the most expensive fools of the two.

WERE it but possible to behold the mind of a good man, as it is illustrated with virtue; the beauty
 † *The dignity of* and the majesty † of it, which is a dignity
virtue. not so much as to be thought of without
 love and veneration; would not a man bless himself at the sight of such an object, as at the encounter of some supernatural power? A power so wonderful, that it is a kind of charm upon the souls of those who are truly affected with it. There is so surprising a grace and authority in it, that even the greatest sinners approve of it, and set up for the reputation of being accounted virtuous themselves. They covet the fruit indeed, and the profit of wickedness, but they are ashamed of the imputation of it, and hate it. It is by an impression of

nature, that all men have a reverence for virtue: Though they do not practise it, yet they know it: Nay, for the countenance of their very *wickedness*, they miscall it *virtue*. They call their injuries benefits, and expect a man should thank them for doing him a mischief; they cover their most notorious iniquities with a pretext of justice. He who robs upon the highway had rather find his booty than force it. Ask any of them who live upon rapine, oppression, or fraud, if they would not rather enjoy a fortune honestly acquired, and their consciences will not allow them to deny it. Men are vicious only for the profit of villainy; for at the same time that they commit it, they condemn it. Nay, so powerful is virtue, and so gracious is providence, that every man has a light set up within him for a guide: which we do all of us both see and acknowledge, though we do not pursue it. It is this which makes the criminal upon the rack happier than the executioner, and sickness better than health, if we bear it without yielding or repining: It overcomes ill fortune, and moderates good; for it marches betwixt the one and the other, with an equal contempt of both. It (like fire) turns all things into itself; our actions and our friendships are tinged with it; and whatever it touches becomes amiable. That which is frail and mortal, rises, and falls, grows, wastes, and varies from itself; but the state of divine things is unchangeable: and so is virtue, let the matter be what it will. It is never the worse for the difficulty of the action, nor the better for the easiness of it. It is the same in a rich man as in a poor; in a sickly man, as in a sound; in a strong, as in a weak; the virtue of the besiegers is not greater than that of the besieged. I must own, there are some virtues which a good man cannot be without, and yet he had rather have no occasion to employ them. Were there any difference, I should give the virtues of patience the preference to those of pleasure; for it is nobler to break through difficulties, than to temper our delights. But, though the subject of virtue may possibly be contrary to nature, as to be burnt, or wounded; yet the virtue itself, of an

invincible patience, is according to nature. We may seem perhaps to promise more than human nature is able to perform; but we speak with a respect to the mind, not to the body.

If a man does not live up to his own rules, it is something yet to have virtuous meditations, * and good purposes; even without acting: the very proposal of a good course of life is generous, though beyond the power of human weakness to accomplish. There is something of honour even in the miscarriage; nay, in the sacred contemplation of it: I would receive my own death with as little trouble, as I would hear of another man's; I would bear the same mind, whether I be rich or poor, whether I gain or lose in the world; what I have, I will not either fordidly spare, or prodigally squander away; and I will reckon upon benefits well placed, as the fairest part of my possession: not valuing them by number, or weight, but by the profit and esteem of the receiver; accounting myself never the poorer for that which I give to a worthy person. What I do shall not be done for ostentation, but conscience. I will eat and drink to satisfy nature, but not to gratify my palate, or only for the pleasure of filling myself: I will be placable and mild to my enemies, and chearful to my friends: If I can foresee an honest request which a friend is going to make of me, I will prevent him, by granting it without asking: I will esteem the whole world as my country, and the gods both as the judges and witnesses of my words and actions. I will live and die with this testimony, that I loved honest studies, and a good conscience; that I preserved my own property, and never incroached upon another person's. I will govern my life and my thoughts as if the whole world were to see the one, and read the other; for, it is needless to conceal any thing from my neighbour, when the Omniscient is privy to all our thoughts and actions.

VIRTUE is divided into two parts, contemplation and

action*. The one is delivered by institution, the other by admonition: one part of virtue consists in discipline, the other in exercise; for we must first learn, and then practise. The sooner we begin to apply ourselves to it, and the more haste we make, we shall the longer enjoy the comforts of a rectified mind; nay, we have the fruition of it in the very act of forming it; but it is a different kind of delight, I must own, that arises from the contemplation of a soul which is advanced into the possession of wisdom and virtue. If it be so great a comfort to us to pass from the subjection of our childhood, into a state of liberty and business; how much greater will it be, when we come to cast off the boyish levity of our minds, and rank ourselves among the philosophers? We are, it is true, past our minority, but not our indiscretions; and, which is still worse, we have the authority of seniors, and the weaknesses of infants; for every little thing frights the one, and every trivial fancy the other. Whoever studies this point well will find, that the more terrible some things appear, the less are they to be feared. It would be reproaching providence, to think a dishonest thing good; for good men suffer many inconveniences; but virtue, like the sun, goes on still with her work, be the air ever so cloudy, and finishes her course: extinguishing also all other splendours and oppositions; insomuch that calamity is no more to a virtuous mind, than a shower into the sea. That which is right is not to be valued by *quantity, time, or number*; a life of a day may be not less honest than that of an hundred years: but yet virtue may have more room to shew itself in one man than in another. One man may perhaps be in a station to administer unto kingdoms and cities; to contrive good laws, create friendships, and do beneficial offices to mankind: It is another man's fortune to be straitened by poverty, or put out of the way by banishment; and yet the latter may be as virtuous as the former; and may have as great a mind, as exact a prudence, as inviolable a justice,

* *Virtue is divided into contemplation and action.*

and as large a knowledge of things both divine and human; without which it is impossible for a man to be happy. For virtue is free to every one, as well slaves as princes: It is profitable to the world, and to itself, at all distances, and in all conditions; and there is no difficulty can excuse a man from the exercise of it; and it is only to be found in a wise man, though there may be some faint resemblances of it in the common people. All virtues are reckoned to be equal by the Stoicks; but yet there is great variety in the matter they have to work upon, according as it is larger or narrower; illustrious, or less noble; of more or less extent; as all good men are equal; that is to say, as they are good; but yet one may be old, another young; one poor, another rich; one eminent and powerful, another unknown and obscure. Several things which have little or no grace in themselves, are made glorious and remarkable by virtue. Nothing can be good but what gives greatness and security to the mind. Virtue dwells not upon the tip of the tongue, but in the temple of a purified heart. He becomes covetous of life, and what belongs to it, who depends upon any other good; and this exposes him to unbounded passions. Virtue is free and indefatigable, and accompanied with concord and gracefulness: whereas pleasure is mean, servile, transitory and sickly, and scarce outlives the tasting of it: it is the good of the belly, and not of the man, and only the felicity of brutes. Who does not know that fools enjoy their pleasures, and that there is great variety in the entertainments of wickedness? Nay, the mind itself has its variety of perverse pleasures as well as the body; as insolence, pride, laziness, self-conceit, and the abusive wit of making a jest of every thing; whereas virtue weighs all this, and corrects it. It is the knowledge as well of others as itself; and the very will itself may be taught; which will cannot be right, unless the whole habit of the mind be right, from whence the will comes. It is by the impulse of virtue that we love virtue, so that the very way to virtue lies by vir-

tue, which takes in also the laws of human life at the same view.

WE must not value ourselves upon a single noble action, but upon the whole habit of the mind. Some people do one thing bravely, but not another; they will support themselves under poverty, and flinch at infamy. We

A virtuous mind must be all of a piece.

We despise the man in this case, and praise the action. The soul is always in the wrong place, till it be delivered from the cares of human affairs: we must labour and climb the hill, if we would arrive at virtue, whose seat is upon the summit of it. He who masters avarice, and is truly good, stands firm against ambition: he looks upon his last hour as the equity of a common fate, and not as a punishment: he who subdues his carnal lusts shall easily keep himself untainted with any other: So that reason does not encounter any of the vices separately, but beats them all down at once. He who values himself upon conscience, is regardless of ignominy. Socrates beheld the approach of his infamous death with the same constancy as he had before practised towards the thirty tyrants: the very dungeon was consecrated by his virtue: as Cato's repulse was Cato's honour, and the reproach of the government. He that is wise will take delight even in an ill opinion that is well gotten; it is not virtue, but ostentation, when a man will have his good deeds published; and to be just where there is honour to be gotten is not sufficient, he must continue so, in spite of danger and infamy.

BUT virtue cannot lie concealed †, for the time will come that shall raise it again (even after it is buried) and deliver it from

† Virtue cannot be hid.

the malignity of the age that oppressed it: immortal glory is the shadow of it, and keeps it company whether we will or no; but the shadow sometimes goes before the substance, and sometimes follows it; and the later it comes, the larger it is, when even envy shall have yielded to it. Democritus was long taken for a madman, before Socrates had made himself famous in the

world. How long was it before Cato could be understood? Nay, he was contemned, dejected, affronted; and people never knew the value of him till they had lost him: Had it not been for the sufferings of mad Rutilius, his integrity and courage would have been forgotten. I speak of those who have been made famous by fortune for their persecutions: and there were others also who were never taken notice of till they were dead; as Metrodorus and Epicurus, who were almost unknown in the very towns where they lived. Some virtues require to be spurred on, and others checked. In *patience*, *perseverance*, and *resolution*, we stand in need of encouragement; but in *liberality*, and *temperance*, we are to check ourselves, for fear of falling. Upon this division of the matter, I had rather steer the smoother course, than pass thro' the experiments of sweat and blood: I know it is my duty to be content in all conditions; but yet if it were in my option, I would make choice of the fairest. When a man stands in need of fortune, his life is dependent upon every moment, is suspicious, timorous, anxious, and afraid of all accidents. How is it possible for the man who shrinks at every motion of pleasure or pain, to bear his lot, whatever it be, without repining, and chearfully resign himself to Providence? Virtue raises us above griefs, hopes, fears, and chances; and makes us not only patient, but willing, as being sensible that whatever we suffer is according to the decree of God. What will become of him that is overcome with pleasure, so despicable and weak an enemy, when he has to struggle with torments, necessities, dangers, and even the dissolution of nature itself? A man may fortunately acquire riches and honour; nay, they come to him without so much as looking after them; but virtue is the work of industry and labour; and certainly it is worth the while to purchase that good which brings all others along with it. A good man is happy within himself, and independent upon fortune; he is friendly, affectionate, and discharges all the duties of a christian with honesty and integrity.

See Seneca's Life Page 8.



C H A P. IV.

Philosophy the Guide of Life.

IF the *understanding* and the *will* are really the *greatest faculties* of the *reasonable soul*, it must necessarily follow, that *virtue* and *wisdom*, with all the improvements of these two faculties, must also be the perfection of our *reasonable being*; and in course the *unquestionable foundation* of a *happy life*. Providence has annexed a blessing to every duty, and we may be the better, even in this life, by every institution of heaven; every temptation, either of appetite or fortune which is not subject to our reason: and virtue is a sovereign remedy for afflictions. So that if we either fear or hope for any thing, it is our own fault; for these two affections are the foundation of all our miseries. From this general view of the *foundation* of our *peace*, we shall pass on to a particular consideration of the *means* by which it may be *attained*; and of the *opposition* to it; we shall begin with that *philosophy* which principally regards the manners, and instructs us in the pleasures of a calm and virtuous life.

† PHILOSOPHY is divided into *rational*, *moral*, and *natural*: the first supplies us with propriety of *arguments* and *words*, and the faculty of *distinguishing*, that we may not be imposed upon. The second concerns our *morals*. The third searches the works of *nature*. *Arguments* fall under *rational philosophy*; the *causes* of things under *natural*, and *actions* under *moral*. Moral philosophy is again divided into matter of *justice*, which arises from the estimation of men and things; and into *actions* and *affections*; and if any of these fail, it puts all the others out of order: for if our passions transport us, it can be of no value to understand the or-

† *Philosophy is rational, moral, and natural.*

der of things; and to master our appetites can be of no use, unless we understand all the circumstances of our proceedings. It is one thing to be acquainted with the dignity and rate of things, and another to know the smell, nicks and springs of action. *Natural philosophy* speaks of things *corporeal* and *incorporeal*; the examination of *causes* and *effects*, and the meditation on the *cause of causes*: *Rational Philosophy* is divided into *rheterick* and *logick*; the one respects sense, order, and words; the other treats only of words, and the meaning of them. Socrates places all *philosophy* in *morals*; and *wisdom* in distinguishing *good* and *evil*. It is the law of life, and instructs us in all cases what to do, and to hit the mark at any distance, like good marksmen. It is of incredible force; in the weakness of man, it gives us the security of a *spirit*: it is a remedy to us in sickness; for ease of mind is beneficial to the body. A physician may prescribe exercise and diet, and suit his medicine to the disorder; but it is philosophy alone which must make death contemptible; for it is a remedy to all disorders. In poverty, it gives us such a state of mind as makes riches appear superfluous; by *philosophy* we are armed against every difficulty: poverty oppresses one man, envy others; and some are dissatisfied with providence in the condition of mankind. But it incites us to relieve the needy, the prisoner, the infirm, the condemned; to make the ignorant sensible of their errors, and rectify their affections. It rouses us when we are faint and heavy, obliges us to inspect and govern our manners, binds up the loose, humbles the obstinate, frees the mind from the slavery of the body, and raises it to the meditation of its divine original. Time destroys honours, monuments, and all the works of pride and vanity; but a reputation of wisdom is venerable to posterity; and those who were neglected or envied in their life-times are in their memories respected, and exempted from the laws of created nature, which has set bounds to every thing else. It would be ridiculous if *right reason* did not inspire a *virtuous* mind with ge-

nerous resolutions, when the very shadow of *glory* bears a man of *honour* through all dangers, despising fire and sword.

PHILOSOPHY is not profitable to the public only, † one wise man assists another, even in the exercise of their virtues; the one has occasion for the other's help, both for advice and conversation, for they inspire a desire of superiority in doing good offices. We are not yet so perfect, but that many new things may be discovered, which may be a material advantage in instructing each other. It is the same with good men and their virtues, as with wicked men, who are contagious to each other. As men of letters are the best of friends, so they are the most useful subjects; they are proper judges of the blessings they enjoy under a well ordered government, and of what is due to a magistrate for their protection and freedom. They are men of learning and sobriety, free from pride and insolence, reproving the vice, without reproaching the person who is guilty of it; for they have learned wisdom without envy or pride. What we observe in high mountains is similar to *philosophers*; they appear taller near to us than they do at a distance. They are raised above other men by a substantial greatness; they do not endeavour to appear higher than other men, but are satisfied with their own stature, and think themselves high enough when they are out of the reach of fortune. Their laws are short, yet they bind all, for they are comprehensive.

† *One wise man is taught by another.*

WE are indebted to the bounty of nature for life, but † *philosophy* teaches us to live well, which in reality is a greater benefit than life itself. Philosophy is the gift of heaven also, as to the faculty, but the science must be attained by industry. Virtue and wisdom requires a tutor, for no man is born wise; but vicious courses are learned without the help of a master. *Philosophy* gives us a respect for the Almighty; charity to mankind; and good agreement with each other: It shews things plainly which appeared ter-

† *We are taught to live well by philosophy.*

rible, refutes our errors, alluages our lusts, reproves covetousness, restrains luxury, and works upon our tender nature wonderfully. I could never hear Attalus, says Seneca, speak upon the vices of the age, and errors of life, without feeling compassion for mankind: and I thought it more than human, when he discoursed on poverty: *To have more than we use, says he, is more than we require, and is a burden to the possessor.* When he expressed this, the recollection of my superfluous fortune put me out of countenance; and when speaking against vain pleasures, he advanced so much in commendation of a pure mind, a chaste body, and the happiness of a sober table, that any person present could not avoid admiring continence and moderation. His lectures had so good an effect upon me, that for some time after I denied myself particular delicacies which I formerly made use of; but in a little time took to them again, but so sparingly, that it was very little short of entire abstinence.

Young people are ready to take good impressions.

To shew how much more serious I was upon my entrance on philosophy, says our author, than in my advancement; Sotian my tutor gave me a strange regard for Pythagoras, and afterwards for Sextius: the former avoided shedding of blood upon his *metempsychosis*, and made men afraid of it, lest they should offer violence to the souls of their departed friends. *Whether there be a transmigration or not, says he; if there be, no harm is done; if false, it is frugal; there is nothing gained by barbarity, but perhaps robbing a wolf or vulture of a supper.* And on another account Sextius abstained; *he would not have men innured to cruelty of mind, by destroying and torturing living creatures; besides, that nature had provided plentifully for the sustenance of mankind without shedding blood.*

THIS had so great an effect upon me, that I debarred myself from eating flesh; and in a year it became pleasant to me to be without it; I found my mind more easy, and still remain in the same opinion, yet I gave it over, for this reason;

the forbearance of some sorts of flesh was looked upon by the Jews as superstition; and least it should be supposed I abstained from it for that reason, my father prevailed on me to follow my old custom; but I did it with great reluctance. This is an instance how ready youths are to take good impressions, if there is a friend near to induce them. Philosophers are the tutors of mankind; if they have discovered remedies for the mind, it is our business to make them useful to us. It is with the greatest veneration I reflect on Cato, Lelius, Socrates, Plato; their names are sacred to me. Philosophy is the health of the mind; let it be the first consideration, and the health of the body the second, which may be more easily got: a robust constitution, a strong arm, or the skill of procuring those, do not belong to a philosopher. Some things he does as a *wise man*, and other things as *men in general*: but if he runs, or casts the sledge, it is very hurtful to impute to his wisdom what is common to the most ignorant. His study is not to fill his coffers, but his mind; he is sensible that gold and silver were mingled with dirt, till they were separated by ambition and covetousness. His life is regular, without fear, steady, secure; in all extremes he is firm, and bears the lot of his humanity with a divine temper. The splendour of fortune and philosophy is very different; the one shines with a borrowed light, the other with an original one; it makes us immortal and happy, for learning will last longer than palaces or monuments. A wise man's house, though narrow, is safe; it is without either noise or furniture; nothing in it either mercenary or vendible, nor any business of fortune; for she has nothing to do where she has nothing to look after. Nature has marked out this road to heaven, as both safe and pleasant; there is no occasion for servants, pomp, nor equipage, to make our passage good; no money or credit is needful upon the journey; the graces of an honest mind are sufficient, and will make us happy at the end of it.

† *The liberal sciences are matters of curiosity more than virtue.*

To give you my opinion of the *liberal sciences* †, I do not esteem those which include money or gain; yet they are so far useful, as they only *prepare* the understanding, without *detaining* it. They are only the rudiments of wisdom, and to be learned when the mind is capable of nothing better; the knowledge of which is better worth keeping than acquiring; they do not attempt to make us virtuous, but to dispose us to be so. The grammarian's business lies in a *syntax* of speech; or if he proceed to *history* or the measuring of *verse*, he is at the end of his line: but of what signification is congruity of periods, computing of syllables, or modifying of numbers, to the more important affair of calming our passions, or repressing our lusts? The *philosopher* proves the body of the sun to be large, but we must enquire of the mathematician for the true dimensions of it: if *geometry* and *music* do not teach us to master our hopes and fears, all the rest is to little purpose. Of what signification is it to me whether Homer or Hesiod was eldest? or whether Helen or Hecuba was tallest? We are at great trouble to trace Ulysses in his wanderings; but the time would be better spent to look into ourselves, and avoid wandering. We are tossed with tempestuous passions, assaulted on one side with terrible monsters, and on the other hand tempted by Sirens. Instruct me in my duty to my country, father, wife, and mankind. It is of no consequence to me, whether Penelope was *honest* or not; instruct me how to be so myself, and to live according to that knowledge. What the better am I for putting together so many parts in music, and raising an harmony out of so many different tones? Instruct me to tune my affections, and to hold constant to myself. Geometry instructs me how to *measure acres*; instruct me how to *measure my appetites*, and be sensible when I have enough: instruct me to divide with my brother, and to rejoice at the welfare of my neighbours. You instruct me in what manner I may hold my own, and keep my estate; but I would rather be taught how to be

content, if I lost all. You will say, *it is hard for a man to be deprived of the fortune of his family*. It is true, this estate was my father's; but to whom did it belong in the time of my great-grand father? Nay, to what nation did it then belong? The *astrologer* tells me of Saturn and Mars in *opposition*, but let them be as they will, their positions and courses are ordered by an unalterable decree of fate. They either point out or signify the effects of every thing: if the former, what are we the better for knowing what must unavoidably happen? or what does it avail us, to foresee what we cannot prevent? The event will be the same whether we know or not.

HE should not be too curious about words who designs the institution of human life. It is not suitable to his dignity to be anxious about sounds and syllables; it is debasing the mind of man with mean and trifling things, to place wisdom in affairs more difficult than great. If he be *eloquent*, it is not his *business*, but his *good fortune*. Artful disputations are the sport of wits only, that play upon the catch, and deserve to be condemned rather than resolved. Would I not be esteemed a madman, to sit disputing about words, when the enemy has already made the breach, the town fired over my head, and the mine ready to play, which will blow me up into the air? Is this a time for fooleries? I should rather fortify myself against death, and unavoidable necessities; I should make myself sensible that the good of life does not consist in the length of it, but in a proper use of it. When I go to sleep it is uncertain if I shall ever awake; and when I am awake, whether I shall ever lie down in my bed to sleep more. When I go out, whether I shall return; and when I am at home, if ever I shall go abroad again. It is not at sea only that life and death are so near each other; it is every where the same, though not so much observed. We have nothing to do with trifling and impertinent questions, but rather to study how to free ourselves from sadness, fear, and the burden of secret lusts: let us lay

To be curious about words is not for the dignity of a philosopher.

aside our most solemn levities, and hasten to a good life. Should a messenger who is sent for a midwife stand gazing at a play-bill upon a post? or a person wait for the dressing of his wig when his house is on fire? Our country is invaded, our houses are on fire, our goods taken away, our children in danger; to these we might add, the misfortunes of shipwrecks, earthquakes, and the most terrible things. This is not a time to be trifling idly; the *cure* of the mind is our duty, rather than the *pleasure* of it; but we have not the works of wisdom, only the words; and turn philosophy, which was given for a remedy, into a pleasure. What can be more simple, than for a man to *compose* his *style*, and *neglect* his *manners*? We are sick, have sores, and must be cut and lanced, and every man has as much business within himself as a physician has in a common plague. In short, it is not possible to avoid misfortunes; but if they cannot be overcome, they may be sweetened, and by philosophy our lives may be made happy.



C H A P. V.

The Force of Precepts.

THERE appears so great a connection betwixt *philosophy*, *wisdom*, and *good advice*, that it can be of no consequence to divide them. *Philosophy* is a *limited wisdom*, and *good advice* a *communication* of that *wisdom*, for the benefit of other people as well as ourselves, and to reach even to *posterity*. The *wisdom* of the antients, respecting the government of life, was no more than particular precepts directing what to do, and what to avoid: Men were better in a state of simplicity, for when they became more *learned*, they took less care of doing *good*; *plain* and *open virtue* is now a *difficult science*, and we are instructed rather to *dispute* than to *live*. When wickedness was simple, simple remedies were sufficient,

against it; but since it has taken root, stronger remedies are necessary.

SOME people embrace good advice as * *Good advice is*
 * soon as they hear it; but they will still *useful to the best*
 require quickening by precepts. In some *of us.*
 cases we are backward, and in other cases
 forward and rash: There is no subduing the one humour, or
 raising of the other, unless the causes are removed; which are
false fear and false administration. All men are sensible of
 their duty to their country, friends, and visitants: and yet when
 he is called upon to draw his sword for the one, or to assist the
 other, he is divided betwixt his fears and pleasures. A man
 in keeping a wench is sensible how much he injures his wife;
 yet he is overcome by his lust, so that to give good advice is
 not sufficient, except we can remove that which prevents it
 from having a good effect. If a man does what he should do,
 he will not do it regularly and constantly, without knowing
 why. And if he does right only by chance, he may also do
 ill by chance. A rule may direct us what to do, and yet we
 may fall short in the way of doing it. An expensive enter-
 tainment may in one case be esteemed extravagant, and in an-
 other discreet and honourable. Tiberius Cæsar was presented
 with a large mullet, which he sent to market to be sold: ha-
 ving company at that time with him, he told them, *They*
would see that either Apricius or Octavius would purchase this
fish. Accordingly Octavius was the purchaser, and gave thirty
 pounds sterling for it. Now it made a very great differ-
 ence between Octavius, who bought it for his own luxury,
 and the other, who bought it for a present to Tiberius. Rules
 are useless if they do not teach us what opinion we should
 have of the matter in dispute; whether it be riches, poverty,
 sickness, disgrace, banishment, &c. We must therefore exa-
 mine them separately, not what they are *called*, but what they
 really *are.* And so for the *virtues*: it is to no purpose to va-
 lue prudence, temperance, fortitude, or justice, if we are not
 sensible what virtue is.

† *The advantage
of advice.*

USEFUL rules † are of great consequence, and are a better help towards a happy life than whole volumes of cautions not readily found. We should constantly meditate upon those precepts, as the best rules to manage our lives. Admonition is only blowing the coal, but when those precepts are contracted into sentences, they strike the affections, move the strength of the mind, and excite virtue. We already have the thing, but know not where it lies. The understanding is nourished and enlarged by precepts; the offices of justice and prudence are guided by them, and they induce us to do our duty. A *precept* delivered in *prose* has not so much effect as in *verse*. Even covetous people, when they hear a sharp sentence against avarice, how they will admire it, and despise riches. When we find the affections struck, we should follow the blow, not with *sylogisms* or quirks of wit, but with *grave* or *steady reasons*; also with *respect* and *kindness*; for there is a blessing attends discourses wholly intended for the benefit of the hearer: and reasonable discourses are the most efficacious. People should be informed, *why* such and such things are done; for weak understandings have occasion for an explanation of what is good, and what is bad. To *love, give, and follow good advice* is a great virtue; if it does not make us honest, it prompts us to it at least. As the most agreeable music arises from discords, and several parts make but one harmony; so a wise man should gather many acts, precepts, and examples, to inform his own life. We have a charge from our fore-fathers to avoid three things, *hatred, envy, and contempt*; for in being too careful not to usurp upon others, we sometimes are liable to be imposed on ourselves. Some people are afraid of others, because it is likely others may be afraid of them: but we should secure ourselves on all hands: *flattery* is as dangerous as *contempt*. We ought not to say in case of *advice, This I knew before*: we know many things which we do not think of; so that it is not so much the business of a *monitor* to *teach* as to *remind* us of our duty. A man often o-

verlooks what is just before his eyes; at another time he is careless, or pretends that he does not see it. We are all sensible, that friendship is sacred, notwithstanding that we violate it: even the greatest libertine expects his own wife should be chaste.

THE most useful service we can do to mankind, is to give them † *good advice*, which may succeed with *some*, if given to *many*. He does a very great thing, who places a man in the possession of himself.

† *The greatest service we can do to mankind is to give good advice.*

Wisdom shews itself in the life more than in precept; it discovers itself in a firmness of resolution, and instructs us to *act* as well as *talk*; and to make our words and actions suitable. If fruit from a tree of our own planting be most agreeable, what pleasure must the increase of good manners of our own forming give us? It is a great sign of good sense for a man to be always like himself. Some people keep a frugal table, and throw money out upon building; narrow at home, and profuse abroad. This unsteadiness is idle, and the effect of a dissatisfied and uneasy mind, whereas every wise man lives by rule. From hence arises disagreement of purposes; we either do not propose to ourselves what we would be at, or we do not pursue it, but go from one thing to another: neither do we *change*, but return to the very thing which we had both condemned and left.

IN whatever we take in hand, † let us consider our own strength; the undertaking next; and thirdly, the people with whom we are concerned. The first point is the most important; for we are apt to set too great a value upon ourselves, and imagine we can do more than we are really capable of. One man sets up for a speaker, and as soon as he opens his mouth, he is out; another overcharges his body, or estate; a bashful man is not fit for business: some are too stiff for the court; some very ready

† *Three points to be considered in all our undertakings.*

to fly out in their anger; some run into frolicks, if any thing merry fall in their way, and would rather break their necks than lose a jest. It would be better for those people to retire from business, than pursue it. Let him who is naturally passionate, and impatient, avoid every provocation, and those affairs also which multiply and draw on more; and those also from which there is no retreat. When we come off at pleasure, and fairly hope to bring our matters to a conclusion, it is well enough. If it so happen that a man be tied up to business, which he can neither loosen nor break off; let him imagine those shackles upon his mind to be irons upon his legs: they are troublesome at first, but when there is no remedy but patience; custom makes them easy to us, and necessity gives us courage. We are all slaves to fortune; some in coarse and strait chains, and others in loose and golden ones: nay, and *they that bind us, are slaves too themselves*; some to honour, others to wealth; some to offices, others to contempt; some to their superiors, others to themselves; nay, life itself is a servitude: Let us make the best of it then, and with our philosophy mend our fortune. Difficulties may be softened, and heavy burdens disposed of to our ease. Let us covet nothing out of our reach, but content ourselves with things hopeful, and at hand; and without envying the advantages of others: For greatness stands upon a craggy precipice; and it is much safer and quieter living upon a level. How many great men are forced to keep their station upon mere necessity, because they find there is no coming down from it but headlong! These men should do well to fortify themselves against ill consequences, by such virtues and meditations, as may make them less solicitous for the future. The surest expedient in this case is to bound our desires, and to leave nothing to fortune which we may keep in our own power. Neither will this course wholly compose us, but it shews us, at worst, the end of our troubles.

WE should be very careful in * proposing nothing but what is hopeful and honest: For it will be as troublesome to us not to succeed, as to be ashamed of the success. Let us therefore keep all evil designs from our hearts; that we may lift up pure hands to heaven, and ask nothing which may hurt another person. Let us pray for a good mind, which wish will injure no man. I will never forget that I am a man, and will consider, that if I am *happy* at present, it will not last *always*; if *unhappy*, I may be *otherwise* if I chuse. I will carry my life in my hand, and freely give it up when it shall be demanded. I will be careful of being a slave to myself, for it is a shameful, a perpetual, and the heaviest of all servitudes; and this may be done by moderate desires. I will say to myself, *As I shall soon leave this earthly frame, for what do I labour so much, when so little sufficeth nature?* He should set certain days aside for the trial of his virtues, who would be sensible of his magnanimity. Let him mortify himself with fasting, coarse cloaths, and hard lodging; and then say to himself, *Is this all that I was afraid of?* A man may thus prepare himself against hazards in a state of security, and fortify himself against want in plenty. If you would have a man resolute when he comes to the push, train him up to it before-hand. The soldier does duty in peace, that he may not be unaccustomed to arms when war comes. How many great and wise men have made experiments of their moderation by a practice of abstinence, to the highest degree of hunger and thirst; and convinced themselves, that a man may fill his belly, without being beholden to fortune; which never denies any of us wherewith to satisfy our necessities, though she be never so hungry? It is as easy to *suffer it always* as to *try it once*; and this numbers of servants and poor people do constantly. He must neither trust to good fortune, nor submit to bad, who would live happily: he must be continually upon watch, for fear of assaults: he must stick to himself, without any dependence upon other people. When the mind

* *We ought not to propose any thing but what is hopeful and honest.*

is tinged with philosophy, there is no room for grief, anxiety, or superfluous vexations. It is prepossessed with virtues, to the neglect of fortune, which brings us to a degree of security not to be disturbed. It is easier to give advice than to take it; and a common thing for one passionate man to condemn another. We may be sometimes earnest in advising, but not violent or tedious. Few words, with gentleness and efficacy, are best; the misery is, that the wise do not need counsel, and fools will not take it. A good man likes it; it being a mark of ill-nature and folly to hate reproof. I would never be otherwise than plain and free to a friend; and rather fail in the success, than be wanting in the matter of faith and trust. There are some precepts that serve in common, both to the rich and poor, but they are too general; as, *Cure your avarice, and the work is done*. It is one thing not to desire money, and another thing not to understand how to use it. In the choice of the persons we have to do withal, we should see that they be worth our while; in the choice of our business, we are to consult nature, and follow our inclinations. He who gives sober advice to a witty droll, must except to have every thing turned into ridicule. *As if you philosophers* (says Marcellinus) *did not love your whores and your guts as well as other people*; and then he tells you of such and such as were taken in the manner. We are all sick, I must own, and the sick are not proper to play the physicians; but it is yet lawful for a man in an hospital to discourse of the common condition, and distempers of the place. He who should pretend to teach a madman how to speak, walk, and behave himself, were not he the madder man of the two? He that directs the pilot, makes him move the helm, order the sails so or so, and make the best of a scant wind, after this or that manner. And so should we do in our counsels. Tell me not what a man should do in health or poverty; but shew me the way to be either sound or rich. Teach me to master my vices: for it is needless to tell me, while I am under their government, what I must do when I am clear of it. Precepts will help us for-

ward, and tutor us how to behave ourselves, in case of an avarice a little eased, a sluggish humour quickened, a temerity restrained, and a luxury moderated. The military oath is the main tie of a soldier, and is an engagement upon him both of religion and honour. In like manner, he that pretends to a happy life, must first lay a foundation of virtue, as a bond upon him, to live and die true to the cause. Felicity is not to be found in the veins of the earth, where we dig for gold, nor in the bottom of the sea, where we fish for pearl; but in a pure and untainted mind, which, if it were not holy, were not fit to entertain the deity. The man who would be truly happy, must think his own lot best, and so live with men, as considering that God beholds him, and so speak to God, as if men heard every thing he said.



CHAP. VI.

Peace of Conscience is the greatest Happiness in Life.

THE certain testimony and reward of a *good life* is *peace of conscience*, which fortifies a man against fortune, when he has subdued his passions; placed his treasure and his security within himself; learned to be satisfied with his condition; and that death is no evil in itself, but only the dissolution of the mortal frame. He who has dedicated his mind to virtue, and to the good of human society, of which he is a member, has consummated all that is either profitable or necessary for him to know, or do, toward the establishment of his peace. All mankind have within them a judge and a witness of all the good and ill they do; which inspires us with great thoughts, and administers salutary counsels to us. We are struck with a reverential awe upon beholding the heads of rivers, springs of medicinal waters, caves, and whatever is remarkable in nature. We must acknowledge, when we see a

man who is quite composed in the midst of the greatest tumults, and is regardless of all manner of misfortunes, that a beam of the divinity moves within him. This leads us to the disquisition of things divine and human; what the world was before the distribution of the first matter into parts; what power it was that drew order out of that chaos, and gave laws to every particle thereof; what that space is beyond the world, and from what cause the several operations of nature proceed. Shall any man behold the splendour and order of the world; such numberless particles of matter connected in one mass; such a diversity of things, which are yet distinguished; the world enlightened, and the disorders of it so surprisingly regulated; and shall he not contemplate the Author and Disposer of all this? and whither we ourselves shall go, when our souls shall be freed from the bondage of our flesh? We shall behold the whole creation conform to the dictates of Providence, and follow God both as a governor and as a guide. A great, a good, and a right mind, is a kind of divinity lodged in flesh, and may be possessed as well by a slave as a king; it came from heaven, where it must also return; and it is a kind of heavenly happiness which a pure and virtuous mind enjoys, in some degree, even upon earth: whereas temples of honour are but empty names, which probably owe their beginning either to ambition, or to violence. I am strangely transported with the thoughts of eternity; nay with the belief of it; for I very much regard the opinion of great men, especially when they promise things so much to my satisfaction: for they do promise them, though they do not prove them. The meditation of the immortality of the soul makes me condemn this life, in expectation of a better. But still, though we are sensible we have a soul, yet we cannot conceive what it is, or from whence it proceeds: This only we understand, that all the good or ill we do is under the dominion of the mind; that a clear conscience states us in an inviolable peace: And that the greatest happiness in nature is that which every man may bestow upon himself. The body is but the clog and prisoner of the

mind; tossed up and down, and persecuted with punishments, violences, and diseases; but the mind itself is sacred, and eternal, and free from the danger of all actual impression.

A MAN who lives conscientiously *need not regard what people say. The common people take haughtiness and boldness for the marks of magnanimity and honour; and if a man be soft and modest, they look upon him as an easy sop; but when they come once to observe the dignity of his mind, in the equality and firmness of his actions; and that his external calmness is founded upon an internal peace, the very same people have him in esteem and admiration. Virtue is approved of by all, though pursued by few; we see where it is, but we dare not venture to come at it: and the reason is, we over-value that which we must quit to obtain it. A good conscience fears no witnesses, but a guilty conscience is solicitous, even in solitude. If we do nothing unjustly, let every body know it; but if otherwise, it matters not whether any other person know it, provided I know it myself: and unhappy is the man who slights that witness. Wickedness, it is true, may escape the laws, but not the conscience: for a private conviction is the first, and the greatest punishment of offenders; so that the sin plagues itself; and the dread of vengeance pursues even those who escape the stroke of it. It were ill for good men, that iniquity may so easily evade the law, the judge, and the execution, if nature had not set up torments and gibbets in the consciences of sinners. The guilty wretch is continually afraid, and while he is in expectation of being punished, he punishes himself; and whosoever expects it deserves it. Although he is not detected, yet he is afraid of being so. His sleeps are troubled, and he cannot speak of another person's wickedness, without recollecting his own: whereas a good conscience is never disturbed. Those are the only certain, and profitable delights, which arise from the conscience of a well-spent life: we ought to be heedless of what people say, so long as we have peace of con-

* Every man's conscience is his judge.

science: but if our passions be seditious, we have need of no other tumult to keep us awake. An uneasy mind will not obtain rest by the composure of the bed, or the posture of the body: there is an impatient sloth, that may be roused by action, and the vices of laziness must be cured by business. Immense riches, cannot bestow real happiness upon a man; for fortune may take away what she has given me, but she shall not tear it from me; and so long as it does not grow to me, I can freely part with it. He who would perfectly know himself, must set aside his riches, honour, and rank, and examine himself naked; without being put to learn from others the knowledge of himself.

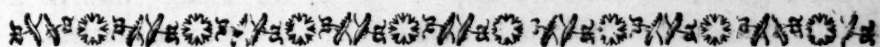
A MAN ought not too suddenly to believe himself: we ought therefore to examine*, watch, and inspect our hearts, for we ourselves are our own flatterers: We should every night ask ourselves, *What virtue have I acquired to day? What passion opposed? What weakness overcome? What temptation resisted?* If we thus daily question ourselves, our vices will soon abate. What a calm repose will he enjoy who acts thus, and is a spy upon his own manners! It is customary with me every night (says our author) as soon as the candle is put out, to run over all the actions of the past day, and let nothing escape; for, why should I be afraid of beholding my own errors, when I can admonish, and forgive myself? *I was rather too hot in such a dispute: my opinion gave offence, and it did no good, so that it might very well have been spared. The thing was true; but all truths are not always to be spoken; I wish I had been silent, for there is no contending either with fools or superiors. I have done ill, but I shall not be guilty of the like again.* Would mankind but thus look into themselves, it would be very much to their advantage. What can be more reasonable than this daily review of a life which we know not how soon may be ended? Our fate is set, and the first breath we draw, is only the first motion toward our last: One cause depends upon another; and the course of all things, public and

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should examine
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private, is but a long connexion of providential appointments. There is a great variety in our lives, but all tends to the same issue. Nature may use her own bodies as she pleases; but a good man has this consolation, that nothing perishes which he can call his own. It is a great comfort that we are only condemned to the same fate with the universe; the heavens themselves will fade away as well as our bodies; nature has made us passive, and to suffer is our lot. While we are in flesh, every man has his chain, and his clog, only it is looser, and lighter to one man than to another; and he is more at ease that takes it up, and carries it, than he that drags it. We are born to lose, and to perish; to hope and to fear, to vex ourselves and others; and there is no antidote but virtue against a common calamity; for the conscience contains the foundation of true felicity.



C H A P. VII.

A good Man can never be miserable, nor a wicked Man happy.

THERE is not a more inseparable connexion of cause and effect, in the scale of nature, than in the case of happiness and virtue: nor any thing that more naturally produces the one, or more necessarily presupposes the other. For, what is to be happy, but for a man to content himself with his lot, in a cheerful and quiet resignation to the appointments of the Almighty? Every action of our lives should be governed with a respect to good and evil: and it is only reason that distinguishes: by which reason we are in such a manner influenced, as if a ray of the Divinity were dipt in a mortal body; and that is the perfection of mankind. We have not, I own, the sagacity of hounds, or the eyes of eagles; nor if we had, could we pretend to value ourselves upon any thing which we have in common with brutes. What the better are we for that which is foreign to us, and may be given and taken away?

As the beams of the sun enlighten the earth, and yet remain where they were; so is it in some proportion with an holy mind, that illustrates all our actions, and yet adheres to its original. Why is not a horse as well commended for his glorious trappings, as a man for his pompous additions? Does not a lion appear more fierce and terrible in his natural freedom, than when chained? so that every thing in its pure nature pleases us best. A good man cannot be discredited by the want of health, riches, nobility; nor a wicked man justified by being possessed of all these. That is the sovereign blessing, which makes the possessor of it valuable without any thing else, and him that wants it contemptible, though he had all the world besides. If a ship be strong and tight, and a nimble sailer, that renders her valuable, not her gilding, carving, and painting. It is not the richness of the scabbard that makes a sword good, but the edge and temper of the blade: and so a man is rendered considerable by his virtue, not by his riches.

* *A good man makes himself serviceable to mankind.*

EVERY man* ought to make himself serviceable to mankind: if he can, to many; if not, to fewer: if not so neither, to his neighbours; but however, to himself.

There are two republicks, a great one, which is human nature; and a less, which is the place where we were born; Some serve both at a time; some only the greater, and some again only the less: The greater may be served in solitude, and contemplation; and perhaps that way better than any other; but nature intended that we should serve both. A good man may serve the publick, his friend, and himself, in any station: If he be not for the sword, let him take the gown; if the bar does not agree with him, let him try the pulpit; if he be silenced abroad, let him give advice at home; and discharge the part of a faithful friend, and a temperate companion. When he is no longer a citizen, he is yet a man; but the whole world is his country, and human nature never wants matter to work upon: But if nothing will serve a man in the *civil government*, unless he

be *prime minister*; or in the *field*, but *commander in chief*, he himself is to blame. Where the soldier cannot use his hands, he fights with his looks, his example, his voice; and flinches not even when his hands are cut off; and does service too with his very clamour: so that in any condition whatsoever, he still discharges the duty of a good patriot. Nay, he who spends his time well, even in a retirement, gives a great example. We may enlarge indeed, or contract, according to the circumstance of time, place, or abilities, but above all things we must be sure to keep ourselves in action; for he who is slothful, is dead even while he lives. Never was any state so desperate as that of Athens under the thirty tyrants, where he who behaved honestly was punished; and the senate was turned into a college of hangmen: and yet Socrates at that time preached *temperance* to the *tyrants*, and *courage* to the *rest*: and afterwards died an eminent example of faith and resolution, and a sacrifice for the publick good.

A WISE man should not stand shifting and fencing with fortune*, but oppose her valiantly; for he is sufficiently convinced, that she cannot hurt him. She may deprive him of his servants, possessions, dignity; assault his body, put out his eyes, cut off his hands, and strip him of all the external comforts of life. But all this is nothing more than the recalling of a trust, which he has received upon condition of delivering it up again when demanded. He looks upon himself as precarious, and only lent to himself, and yet he does not value himself ever the less, because he is not his own, but takes such care as an honest man should do, of a thing that is committed to him in trust. When he who lent me myself chuses to recall me, it is not a loss, but a restitution; and I must willingly deliver up what was most undeservedly bestowed upon me. And I ought to return my mind better than it was when I received it.

* *The mind is not affected by the injuries of fortune.*

* *A generous instance of a noble mind.*

* WHEN Megara was taken, Demetrius asked Stilpo the philosopher, *What he had lost?* He replied, *Nothing, for I had all that I could call my own about me.* And yet the enemy had then taken possession of his country, his children, and his riches. But he looked on these only as adventitious things, and under the command of fortune: Now he that neither lost any thing, nor feared any thing in a public ruin, but was safe, and at peace, in the middle of the flames, and in the heat of a military intemperance and fury; what violence, or provocation imaginable can put such a man as this out of the possession of himself? Walls and castles may be mined and battered; but there is no art, or engine, that can subvert a steady mind. *I have made my way, says Stilpo, through fire and blood; I know not what is become of my children; but these are transitory blessings, and servants that are condemned to change their masters; what was my own before is my own still: some have lost their estates, others their beloved mistresses; their posts and offices; the usurers have lost their bonds and securities; but, Demetrius, for my part, I have saved all: and do not imagine, after all this, either that Demetrius is a conqueror, or that Stilpo is subdued: it is only thy fortune has been too hard for mine.* Alexander took Babylon; Scipio took Carthage; the Capitol was burnt: But a generous mind cannot be discomposed by any fire or violence. This character must not be reckoned a chimera neither; for instances of this elevated virtue are to be found in all ages, though not many of them. A good man does his duty, be it ever so painful, hazardous, or great a loss to him; and it is not all the riches, the power, and the pleasure in the world; no not any force or necessity, that can make him wicked: He considers what he is to do, not what he is to suffer, and will keep on his course, though the way should be filled with racks and gibbets. And in this instance of Stilpo, who, when he had lost his country, his wife, his children, the town on fire over his head, himself escaping with the utmost difficulty out of the flames; *I have*

saved all my effects, says he, *my courage, my justice, my temperance, my prudence*; esteeming nothing his own or valuable; and shewing how much more difficult it was to overcome one single wise man, than a whole nation. To be unconcerned at misfortunes, is a certain mark of a brave mind. The upper region of the air admits neither clouds nor tempests; the thunder, storms, and meteors are formed below; and this is the difference betwixt an exalted and a mean mind; the former is venerable, modest, composed, and always quiet in its station; the latter is rude, and tumultuary. In a word, it is the conscience that pronounces upon the man, whether he be happy, or miserable. But, though sacrilege and adultery be generally condemned, what numbers are there still, who do not so much as blush at the one, and who glory in the other! For nothing is more common than for great thieves to ride in triumph, when the little ones are punished. But, though a wicked man may chance to escape at the bar, yet the conscience never fails to punish him very severely.



C H A P. VIII.

The certain Cure of all Misfortunes is the Contemplation of Divine Providence.

WHOEVER observes the world, and the order of it, will find all the motions in it to be only vicissitude of falling and rising; nothing being extinguished, and even those things which seem to us to perish, are in reality but changed. The seasons go and return; day and night follow in their courses; the heavens roll, and nature continues her work. All things succeed in their turns; storms and calms; the law of nature will have it so, which we must follow, and obey, esteeming every thing that is done to be well done: So that what we cannot mend, we must suffer, and wait upon Provi-

dence without repining. A cowardly foldier follows his commander groaning, but a generous man resigns himself to God without the leaft uneafinefs; and it is only for a narrow mind to condemn the order of the world; and to propound rather the mending of nature, than of himfelf. No man has any reason to complain againft Providence, if he is pleafed with that which is right. Thofe glories that appear fair to the eye, their luftre is but falfe and fuperficial; and they are only vanity and delufion: they are rather a visionary than a fubftantial poffeffion; they may cozen us at a diftance, but bring them once to the touch, they are rotten and counterfeit. Several of thofe whom mankind think happy, are the moft wretched; thofe are the only true and uncorruptible comforts, that will abide all trials; and the more we turn, and examine them, the more valuable we find them; and the greateft happinefs of all is, not to be needful of any. What is *poverty*? No man lives fo poor as he was born. What is *pain*? It will either have an end itfelf, or make an end of us. In fhort, Fortune has no weapon that reaches the mind: but the bounties of Providence are certain and durable bleffings; and they are the greater, and the better, the longer we confider them: That is to fay, *The power of defpifing terrible things, and hating what the common people covet.* In the very methods of Nature, we cannot but obferve the regard that Providence had to the good of mankind, even in the difpofition of the world, in providing fo amply for our maintenance and fatisfaction. It is impoffible for us to comprehend what the power is, which has made all things. Some few farks of that divinity are difcovered, but the greateft part of it lies concealed. We are all of us however thus far agreed, That there really is an Everlafting Father, to whom we fhould afcribe all goodnefs and majefty.

For what reason
good men are af-
flicted in this

If there be a Providence, fay fome people, why are good men fo much afflicted and diftrefied, while wicked men are prosperous? The reason of this is, that the Su-

preme Being deals by us, as a good and affectionate father does by his children; he tries us and fits us for himself. He keeps a strict hand over those he loves, and by the rest he does as we do by our slaves; he lets them go on in license and boldness. As the master sets the most hopeful scholar the hardest task, so does God deal with the most generous spirits; and we ought not to regard the cross encounters of fortune as a cruelty, but as a contest: The familiarity of dangers brings us to the contempt of them, and that part is strongest which is most exercised; the seaman's hand is callous, the soldier's arm is strong, and the tree that is most exposed to the wind takes the best root. Some people live in a perpetual winter, in extremity of frost and want, where a cave, a little straw, or a few leaves, is all their covering, and wild beasts their food: And yet all this is, by custom, not only made tolerable, but when once it is taken upon necessity, it by degrees becomes agreeable to them. Wherefore then should we count that condition of life a calamity, which is the lot of several nations? There is no state of life so miserable, but there are in it remissions, diversions; nay, and delights too; such is the kindness of nature towards us even in the severest accidents of human life. It would be impossible to live, if adversity should continue as it begins, and keep up the force of the first impression. We frequently repine at many things as great evils, that have nothing at all of evil in them beside the complaint, which we should more reasonably take up against ourselves. If I be sick, it is part of my fate; and for other calamities, they are usual things; they ought to be; nay, which is more, they must be, for they come by divine appointment. So that we should not only submit to God, but assent to him, and obey him out of duty, even if there were no necessity: All those frightful appearances that make us groan and tremble, are but the tribute of life; we are neither to wish, nor to ask, nor to hope to escape them; for it is a kind of dishonesty to pay a tribute unwillingly. Am I tormented with the stone;

or afflicted with continual losses? Nay, is my body in danger? All this is no more than what I prayed for, when I prayed for old age: All these things are as familiar in a long life, as dirt and dust in a long way. Life is a warfare; and what brave man would not rather chuse to be in a tent, than in a shambles? Fortune acts like a swordsman, who scorns to attack a fearful man: There is no honour in the victory, where there is no danger in the way to it: She tries Cato by *death*, Rutilius by *banishment*, Mucius by *fire*, Socrates by *poison*. It is only in adverse fortune, and in bad times, that we find illustrious examples. Mucius thought himself happier with his hand in the flame, than if it had been in his mistress's bosom: Fabricius took more delight in eating the roots of his own planting, than in all the delicacies of luxury and expence. Shall we call Rutilius miserable, whom his very enemies have adored? Who upon a glorious, and a publick principle, chose rather to lose his country, than to return from banishment? the only man that denied any thing to Sylla the dictator, who recalled him. Nor did he only refuse to come, but drew himself farther off: *Let the people who think banishment a misfortune, says he, live at Rome like slaves, under the imperial cruelties of Sylla. He who sets a price upon the heads of senators, and after a law of his own institution against murderers, becomes the greatest himself.* Is it not better for a man to live in exile abroad, than to be butchered at home? We are not to consider the torment in suffering for virtue, but the cause; and the more pain, the more renown. When we are afflicted with any misfortune, we must look upon it as an act of Providence, which frequently suffers particulars to be wounded, for the preservation of the whole: Besides, God chastises some people under an appearance of blessing them, turning their prosperity to their destruction, as a punishment for abusing his goodness. And we should also consider, that some good men are afflicted only to teach others how to suffer; for we are born for example: And likewise, that where men are contumacious and refractory, it

often pleases the Almighty to cure greater evils by less, and to turn our calamities to our advantage.

FREQUENTLY those * difficulties and * *Providence*
 dangers which we dread the most, turn *draws good out of*
 out to be benefits and mercies; as banish- *evil.*
 ment, poverty, loss of relations, sickness,
 disgrace. Some are cured by the lance; by fire, hunger, thirst;
 taking out of bones, cutting off limbs, and the like: Nor do
 we only fear things that are many times beneficial to us; but
 on the contrary, we hanker after, and pursue things that are
 deadly and pernicious: we are poisoned in the very pleasures of
 our luxury; and betrayed to a thousand diseases, by the indul-
 ging of our palate. To lose a child, or a limb, is only to part
 with what we have received, and nature may do what she
 pleases with her own. We are frail ourselves, and we have re-
 ceived things transitory: That which was given us may be ta-
 ken away; calamity tries virtue, as the fire does gold: Nay,
 he that lives most at ease, is only delayed, not dismissed, and
 his portion is to come. When we are visited with sickness, or
 other afflictions, we are not to murmur as if we were ill-used:
 It is a mark of the general's esteem, when he puts us upon a
 dangerous post: We do not say, *My captain uses me ill*, but,
He does me honour: And so should we say, who are command-
 ed to encounter difficulties, for this is our case with the Su-
 preme Being.

WAS Regulus * any thing the worse * *Calamity is the*
 for being made choice of by fortune as an *trial of virtue.*
 eminent instance both of patience and faith?

He was thrown into a case of wood stuck with sharp-pointed
 nails; so that whatever way he turned his body, it rested upon
 its wounds; his eye-lids were cut off to prevent him from
 sleeping; and yet Mæcenas was not happier upon his *bed*,
 than Regulus upon his *torments*. Nay, the world is not yet
 grown so wicked, as not to prefer Regulus before Mæcenas.
 And can any man reckon that to be an evil, which Providence
 accounted the brave man worthy of? *It is God's pleasure*, says

he, to pitch upon me as a person upon whom he might make a trial of the force of human nature. Every man is ignorant of his strength or value, till put to the proof. The pilot is tried in a storm; the soldier in a battle; the rich man knows not how to behave himself in poverty: he who has lived in popularity and applause is not sensible how he could bear infamy and reproach: nor he that never has children, how he could bear the loss of them. Calamity is the occasion of virtue, and a spur to a noble mind. The very fear of being wounded terrifies a man when he first bears arms, but an old soldier bleeds boldly, because he knows that a man may bleed, and yet come off victorious. Nay, a calamity often turns to our advantage; and great ruins have made way to great glories. A mob has sometimes been quelled by crying out *fire*, and the thief and the traveller have been parted by the interposition of a wild beast; for we are not at leisure for less mischiefs, while we are afraid of greater. A disease saves one man's life; and another is arrested, and taken out of the way, just when his house was falling upon his head.

* *Accidents are neither good nor evil.*

To shew now that the favours, or the crosses* of fortune, and the accidents of sickness, and of health, are neither good nor evil; God permits them indifferently, both to good and evil men. *It is hard, you will say, for a virtuous man to suffer the greatest misery, and for a wicked man to go not only free, but to enjoy himself at pleasure.* And, is it not the same thing for men of prostituted impudence, and wickedness, to sleep in a whole skin, when men of honour and honesty bear arms, lie in trenches, and receive wounds? Or, for the vestal virgins to rise in the night to their prayers, when common strumpets lie at ease in their beds? We should rather say with Demetrius, *If I had known the will of heaven before I was called to it, I would have offered myself.* If God chuses to take my children, I have brought them up for that purpose: If my fortune, any part of my body, or my life, I would rather present it, than yield it up: I am ready to part

with it, and to suffer all, for I know that God disposes every thing for the best: Our fate is decreed, and things do not so much happen, as in their due time proceed, and every man's portion of joy and sorrow is pre-determined.

NOTHING can fall amiss to a good man †, that can be charged upon Providence; for reason arms him against wicked actions, lewd thoughts, ambitious projects, blind lusts, and insatiable avarice: and can

† *Nothing that is properly evil can happen to a good man.*

we imagine that God should regard our bodies too? Demetrius discharged himself of his riches as the clog and burden of his mind. Need we be surprized then, if God suffers that to befall a good man, which a good man sometimes does to himself? I lose a son, and why not? when it may sometimes so happen that I myself may kill him. Suppose he be banished by an order of state; Is it not the same thing with a man's voluntarily leaving of his country, and never to return? A good man may be afflicted with many misfortunes, but no evils; for contraries will never incorporate: The quality or taste of the sea could not be changed by all the rivers in the universe. Prudence and religion are superior to every accident, and extract good from every thing; affliction keeps a man in use, and makes him strong, patient, and hardy. Providence treats us like an affectionate father, and brings us up to labours, toils, and dangers; whereas we are rendered weak and spiritless, by the indulgence of a fond mother. God loves us like a generous father, and turns us loose to injuries and indignities: He is pleased when he beholds a brave and a good man struggling with evil fortune, and yet standing steady upon his feet, when the whole world is in disorder about him. And are not we ourselves delighted, when we see a valiant fellow rush with his lance against a lion, or any other wild beast? And the constancy and resolution of the action is the grace and dignity of the spectacle. A man can never be happy, if he does not stand firm against all accidents, and say to himself, *I should have been content, if it might have been so or so; but since it is other-*

wife determined, God will provide better. The more we struggle with our necessities, we draw the knot the harder, and the worse it is with us: And the more the bird flaps and flutters in the snare, the surer she is caught: So that the best way is to submit, and lie still, under this double consideration, That *the decrees of the Almighty are irresistible, and his proceedings unquestionable.*



CHAP. IX.

Of Levity of Mind, and other Impediments of a Happy Life.

IN the foregoing chapters we have shewn what happiness is, and wherein it consists: that it is founded upon wisdom and virtue; for we must first know what we ought to do, and then live according to that knowledge: the great helps philosophy and precepts are towards a *happy life*, have also been considered: the blessing of a good conscience; that a good man can never be miserable, nor a wicked man happy; nor any man unfortunate, that cheerfully submits to Providence. We shall now examine, what is the reason, that when the certain way to happiness lies so fair before us, men will yet persevere in the road which leads to destruction.

* *Impediments of happiness.* (SOME people pass their time* in this world just like straws upon a river; they do not go, but are carried. Others only deliberate upon the parts of life, and not upon the whole: which is a great error; for there is no disposing of the circumstances of it, unless we first propound the main scope. Can any man take his aim without a mark? Or, what wind will suit him who is yet ignorant what port he is for? We live as it were by chance, and by chance we are governed. Some there are who torment themselves with the remembrance of past affairs: *I wonder how I was able to endure so much: Never was any man in my condition; I was given over by every*

body; my very heart was ready to break, &c. Others again afflict themselves with the apprehension of future misfortunes; and very ridiculously both: For the *one* does not *now* concern us, and the *other*, not *yet*: Beside, that there may be remedies for mischiefs likely to happen; for they give us warning by signs, and symptoms of their approach. He who would live quietly should not provoke men in power; but live without giving offence; and if we cannot make all great men our friends, we should at least endeavour not to make them our enemies. We must avoid this, as a mariner would a storm. A rash seaman never considers what wind blows, or what course he steers; but runs at a venture, defying the rocks and the waves: whereas he that is careful, and considerate, informs himself beforehand where the danger lies, and what weather it is like to be: He consults his compass, and shuns those places which are noted for wrecks. A wise man acts in the same manner in the common affairs of life; he avoids those who may hurt him; but he ought to be very careful not to let them know that he does it designedly; for that which a man shuns he tacitly condemns. Let him also be aware of *listeners*, *newsmongers*, and *medlers* in other people's affairs; for their discourse is for the most part unprofitable, and dangerous either to be spoken or heard.

LEVITY † of mind is a great hindrance of repose, and the very change of wickedness is an addition to the wickedness itself; for it is inconstancy added to iniquity: we relinquish the thing we sought, and then we take it up again; and so divide our lives between our lusts and our repentances. From one appetite we pass to another, not so much upon choice as for change; and there is a check of conscience that casts a damp upon all our unlawful pleasures; which makes us lose the day, in expectation of the night, and the night itself for fear of the approaching day. Some people are *always* quiet, and others are *never* so; and they are both to blame: For that which passes for moderation and reserve in the one, is but a

drowfy and unactive sloth; and in the other, that which looks like vivacity and industry, it only a restlessness and agitation. Let motion and rest both take their turns, according to the order of nature, which make both the day and the night: Some are constantly shifting from one to the other: Others again make their whole life but a kind of uneasy sleep: Some lie tossing and turning, till weariness brings them to rest; others again I cannot so properly call inconstant, as lazy. There are several proprieties and diversities of vice; but it is one never-failing effect of it, to live displeased. We do all labour under inordinate desires; we are either timorous and cannot venture, or venturing, we do not succeed; or else we cast ourselves upon uncertain hopes, where we are always solicitous and in suspense. In this distraction, we are apt to propose to ourselves things dishonest and hard; and when we have taken great pains to no purpose, we come then to repent of our undertakings: we are afraid to go on, and we can neither master our appetites, nor obey them. We live and die restless and irresolute; and, which is worst of all, when we grow weary of the publick, and betake ourselves to solitude for relief, our minds are sick, and wallowing, and the very house and walls are troublesome to us; we grow impatient, and ashamed of ourselves: and suppress our inward vexation, till it break our heart for want of vent. This it is that makes us sour, and morose; envious of others, and dissatisfied with ourselves: Till at last, betwixt our troubles for other people's successes, and the despair of our own, we fall foul upon fortune, and the times; and get into a corner perhaps, where we sit brooding over our own disquiets. In these dispositions there is a kind of pruriginous fancy that makes some people take delight in labour, and uneasiness, like the clawing of an itch until the blood starts.

‡ *Change of places is of no service without change of mind.*

‡ THIS is it that puts us upon rambling voyages; one while by land; but still disgusted with the present; the town pleases us to-day; the country to-morrow: The splendours of court at one time; the hor-

rors of a wilderness at another: but all this while we carry our plague about us: for it is not the place we are weary of, but ourselves. Nay, our weakness extends to every thing, for we are impatient equally of toil, and pleasure. This trotting of the ring, and only treading the same steps over and over again, has made many a man lay violent hands upon himself. It must be the change of the mind, not of the climate, that will remove the heaviness of the heart: Our vices go along with us, and we carry in ourselves the causes of our disquiets. There is a great weight lies upon us, and the bare shocking of it makes it more uneasy: Changing of countries in this case, is not travelling but wandering. We must keep on our course, if we would gain our journey's end. *He that cannot live happily any where, will live happily no where.* What is a man the better for travelling? As if his cares could not find him out wherever he goes? Is there any retiring from the fear of death, or of torments? Or from those difficulties which beset a man wherever he is? It is only philosophy that makes the mind invincible, and places us out of the reach of fortune; so that all her arrows fall short of us. This it is that reclaims the rage of our lusts, and sweetens the anxiety of our fears: Frequent changing of places, or counsels, shews an instability of mind: and we must fix the body, before we can fix the soul: We can hardly stir abroad, or look about us, without encountering something or other that revives our appetites. As he that would cast off an unhappy love, avoids whatsoever may put him in mind of the person: So he that would wholly deliver himself from his beloved lusts, must shun all objects that may put them in his head again, and remind him of them. We travel, as children run up and down after strange sights, for novelty, not profit; we return neither the better nor the fonder; nay, even the very agitation hurts us. We learn to call towns and places by their names, and to tell stories of mountains, and of rivers: But, had not our time been better spent in the study of wisdom, and of virtue? In the learning of what is already discovered, and in the quest of things not

yet found out? If a man break his leg, or strain his ancle, he sends presently for a surgeon to set all right again; and does not take horse upon it, or put himself on shipboard: No more does the change of place work upon our disordered minds, than upon our bodies. It is not the place, I hope, that makes either an orator, or a physician. Will any man ask upon the road, Pray which is the way to prudence, to justice, to temperance, to fortitude? No matter whither any man goes, that carries his affections along with him. He that would make his travels delightful, must make himself a temperate companion. A great traveller was complaining, that he was never the better of his travels, *That is very true*, said Socrates, *because you travelled with yourself*. Now had not he better have made himself another man, than to transport himself to another place? It is no matter what manners we find any where, so long as we carry our own. But we have all of us a natural curiosity of seeing fine sights, and of making new discoveries; turning over antiquities, learning the customs of nations, &c. We are never quiet: to day we seek an office; to-morrow we are sick of it: We divide our lives betwixt a dislike of the present, and a desire of the future; but he that lives as he should, orders himself so as neither to fear nor to wish for to-morrow: If it come, it is welcome, but if not, there is nothing lost; for, that which is come, is but the same over again with what is past. As levity is a pernicious enemy to quiet; so pertinacy is a great one too. The one changes nothing, the other sticks to nothing; and which of the two is the worse may be a question. It is many times seen that we beg earnestly for those things which, if they were offered us, we would refuse: And it is but just to punish this easiness of asking with an equal facility of granting. There are some things we would be thought to desire, which we are so far from desiring, that we dread them. *I shall tire you*, says one, in the middle of a tedious story; *Nay, pray be pleased to go on*, we cry, though we wished his tongue out at half way; *Nay*, we do not deal candidly even with God himself. We

should say to ourselves in these cases, *This I have drawn upon myself. I could never be quiet, until I had gotten this woman, this place, this estate, this honour; and now see what is come of it.*

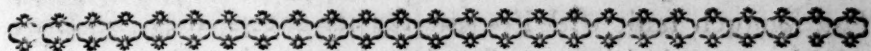
ONE sovereign remedy against all mis- fortunes, is † constancy of mind: The changing of parties, and countenances, looks as if a man were driven with the wind. Nothing can be above him that is

† *We are secured in all difficulties by constancy of mind.*

above fortune. It is not violence, reproach, contempt, or whatever else from without, that can make a wise man quit his ground; but he is proof against calamities, both great and small: Only our error is, that what we cannot do ourselves, we think no body else can; so that we judge of the wise by the measures of the weak. Place me among princes, or among beggars: The one shall not make me proud, nor the other ashamed: I can take as sound a sleep in a barn as in a palace, and a bottle of hay makes me as good a lodging as a bed of down. Should every day succeed to my wish, it should not support me: Nor would I think myself miserable, if I should not have one quiet hour in my whole life. I will not transport myself for either pain or pleasure; but yet for all that, I could wish that I had an easier game to play; and that I were put rather to moderate my joys, than my sorrows. If I were an imperial prince, I had rather take, than be taken: And yet I would bear the same mind under the chariot of my conqueror, that I had in my own. It is no great matter to trample upon those things that are most coveted, or feared by the common people. There are those that will laugh upon the wheel; and cast themselves upon a certain death, only upon a transport of love, perhaps anger, avarice, or revenge; how much more then upon an instinct of virtue; which is invincible, and steady? If a short obstinacy of mind can do this; how much more shall a composed, and a deliberate virtue, whose force is equal and perpetual?

‡ *The less we have to do with the world the better.*

To secure ourselves in this world, we must be careful not to aim at any thing ‡ that men think worth the wrangling for; neither must we lay any great value upon a thing which a thief would think worth the stealing. A man's body is no booty. The poor and the naked pass with the greatest safety in the most dangerous roads, and are never robbed. A sincere honest dealing man is happy, notwithstanding the scorn and contempt of other people. We had better be despised for simplicity, than lie continually upon the torture of a counterfeit; provided that care be taken not to confound simplicity with negligence: And it is moreover an uneasy life, that of a disguise; for a man to endeavour to appear what he is not; to keep a continual guard upon himself, and to live in fear of a discovery. He imagines every one who looks upon him is a spy; over and above the trouble of being put to play another man's part. It is a good remedy in some cases for a man to apply himself to civil affairs, and publick business; and yet in this state of life too, what betwixt ambition and calumny, it is hardly safe to be honest. There are indeed some cases wherein a wise man will give way: but let him not yield over easily neither: If he marches off, he must be cautious of his honour; and make his retreat sword-in-hand, and not turning his back to the enemy. A studious life is the least tiresome of all others; we acquire many friends by it, and are rendered easy as well to ourselves as others.



C H A P. X.

That Man will never be calm and undisturbed who is affected at every Accident.

WE should never call any man happy, whose happiness depends upon fortune: for nothing can be more absurd than to place the good of a reasonable creature in unreasonable things. If I have lost any thing, it was adventitious; and, the less money, the less trouble; the less favour, the less envy: Nay, even in those cases that put us out of our senses; we are not troubled at the loss itself, but at the opinion of the loss. It is a common mistake to account those things necessary that are superfluous, and to depend upon fortune for the felicity of life, which arises only from virtue. There is no trusting to her smiles: the sea swells and rages in a moment; and the ships are swallowed up at night, in the very place where they lay calmly at anchor in the morning. Fortune has the same power over princes that it has over empires; over nations that it has over cities; and the same power over cities that it has over private men. Where is that estate that may not be followed upon the heels with beggary and famine? That dignity, which the next moment may not be laid in the dust? That kingdom that is secure from destruction? The period of all things is at hand, as well that which casts out the fortunate, as the other that delivers the unhappy; and that which may fall out at any time, may fall out this very day. What *shall* happen I know not, but what *may* happen I know; so that I will despair of nothing, but hope for every thing; and whatsoever Providence remits, is clear gain. Every moment, if it spares me, deceives me: and yet in some sort it does not deceive me; for though I am sensible that any thing may happen; yet I am also sensible that every thing will not. I will hope

the best, and provide for the worst. Methinks we should not find so much fault with Fortune for her inconstancy, when we ourselves are instantaneously changing; only other changes make more noise, and this steals upon us like the shadow upon a dial; every jot as certainly, but not so sensibly.

** An instance of the uncertainty of human affairs in the burning of Lyons.*

THE burning of Lyons may serve to shew us *, that we are always in danger; and to arm us against all surprises. The terror of it must needs be great, for the calamity is unparalleled. If it had been set on fire by an enemy, the flame would have left some farther mischief to have been done by the soldiers: But to be wholly ruined, we have not heard of many earthquakes so destructive: Such a variety of rarities to be consumed in one night; and in the midst of peace to suffer an outrage beyond the extremity of war. Who would believe it? No more than twelve hours between so fair a city and none at all. To remain unaffected at such a calamity is hardly to be expected; and our wonder cannot but be equal to our grief. This accident may be a lesson to us, to provide against all possibilities, that fall within the power of Fortune, for all external things are under her dominion: One while she calls our hands to her assistance: another while she is satisfied with her own force, and destroys us with mischiefs of which we cannot find the author. No time, place, or condition is excepted; she makes our very pleasures painful to us: she makes war upon us in the midst of peace, and turns the means of our security into an occasion of fear; she turns a friend into an enemy, and makes a foe of a companion: we suffer the effects of war without any adversary; and rather than fail, our felicity shall be the cause of our destruction. Something extraordinary happens every day, to prevent us either from forgetting or neglecting her. She persecutes the most temperate with sickness, the strongest constitutions with the consumption; she brings the innocent to punishment, and the most retired she assaults with tumults. Those glories which have grown up

with many ages, with great labour and expence, and under the favour of many auspicious providences, one day scatters, and brings to nothing. He that pronounced a day, nay, an hour sufficient for the destruction of the greatest empire, might have fallen to a moment. It were some comfort yet to the frailty of mankind, and of human affairs, if things might but decay as slowly as they rise; but they grow by degrees, and they fall to ruin in an instant. There is no felicity in any thing either private or publick: men, nations, and cities, have all their fates and periods: Our very entertainments are not without terror, and our calamity rises there where we least expect it. Those kingdoms that stood the shock both of foreign and civil wars, came to destruction without the sight of an enemy. Nay, we ought to be more afraid of our peace and happiness than violence; because we are there taken unprovided; unless in a state of peace we do the duty of men in war, and are ready to suffer whatever may befall us. I am to-day safe, and happy in the love of my country; I am to-morrow banished: to-day, in pleasure, peace, and health; to-morrow, tortured, and confined to bed by sickness. Let us therefore prepare for a shipwreck in the port, and for a tempest in a calm. One violence drives me from my country, another ravishes that from me; and that very place where a man can hardly move to-day for a crowd, may to-morrow be a desert. Let us therefore set before our eyes the whole condition of human nature, and consider as well what *may* happen, as what commonly *does*. By contemplating calamities, we make them familiar to us, if ever they should happen. How many cities in Asia, Achaia, Assyria, Macedonia, have been reduced to a heap of ruins by earthquakes! Nay, whole countries are destroyed, and kingdoms laid under water; but time brings every thing to an end, for all the works of mortals are mortal: all possessions and their possessors are wavering and perishable; wherefore then should we be astonished at losing one thing, since at last we shall lose all?

** That is but lent
to us which we
call our own.*

THAT is but lent* to us which we call our own; and what we have received *gratis*, we must cheerfully return. What we have received from Fortune this hour, she may strip us of the next; and he who trusts to her favours, shall either find himself deceived, or if he be not, he will at least be troubled because he may be so. Walls, fortifications, and engines, are but a poor defence against the power of Fortune; we must provide ourselves within, and when we are safe there, we are invincible; we may be battered, but not taken. She throws her gifts among us, and we sweat and scuffle for them: never considering how few are the better for that which is expected by all. Some are transported with what they get; others tormented for what they miss; and there is frequently a leg or an arm broken in disputing for a small sum of money. She bestows honours, riches, and favours, only to take them away again; either by violence or treachery: so that the receiver is often very much hurt by them. She lays snares and baits for us, as we do for birds and beasts; her bounties are traps and lime-twigs to us; we think that we take, but we are taken. If they had any thing in them that were substantial, they would some time or other fill, and quiet us; but they serve only to provoke our appetite, without any thing more than pomp, and show, to allay it. But the best of it is, if a man cannot mend his fortune, he may yet mend his manners, and put himself so far out of her reach, that whether she gives or takes, it shall be all one to us; for we are neither the greater for the one, nor the less for the other. We call this a light room, and that a dark one; when it is in itself neither the one nor the other, but only as the night renders it. And so it is in riches, strength of body, beauty, honour, command: and also in pain, sickness, banishment, death; which are in themselves middle and indifferent things, and only good or bad, as they are influenced by virtue. To weep, lament, and groan, is to renounce our duty; and it is the same weakness on the other side to exult and rejoice; I

would rather make my fortune than expect it; being neither depressed with her injuries, nor dazzled with her favour. When Zeno was told, that all his effects were destroyed, *Why then*, says he, *Fortune intends that I should be a philosopher.* When once a man makes himself superior to her frowns or flatteries, he will always be safe.

It is however some comfort to the un- * *Fortune alike to*
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tary slave; for those things are in themselves neither good nor
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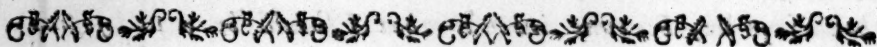
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pain; which can have no proper and necessary effect upon the mind, and only operates upon our outward condition.



C H A P. XI.

A sensual Life is a miserable Life.

THE sensuality here treated of naturally falls under the head of luxury; which extends to all the excesses of gluttony, lust, effeminacy of manners; and in short, to whatever concerns the too great care of the body.

† *The excesses of luxury are painful and dangerous.*

LET us begin with the pleasures of the palate †, which deal with us like Egyptian thieves, who strangle those they embrace. What else than *merry madmen* can we call Nomentanus and Apicius, who entertained their very souls in the kitchen; who had the choicest musick for their ears; the most diverting spectacles for their eyes, and the most exquisite meats and drinks for their palates? They have their delights, I own, but not without heavy and anxious thoughts, even in their very enjoyments; beside that they are followed with repentance, and their frolics are little more than the laughter of so many crazy people. Their felicities are full of disquiet, and neither sincere nor well-grounded: but they have need of one pleasure to support another; and of new prayers to forgive the errors of their former. Their life must undoubtedly be wretched, who get with great pains, what they keep with greater. One diversion overtakes another; hope excites hope; ambition begets ambition; so that they only change the matter of their miseries, without seeking any end of them; and shall never be without either prosperous or unhappy causes of disquiet. If a man might have all the pleasures in the world for the asking, who would so much desert his soul, and become a perpe-

tual slave to his senses? Those false and miserable palates, that judge of meats by the price, and difficulty, not by the healthfulness, or taste: they vomit that they may eat; and they eat that they may fetch it up again. They cross the seas for rarities, and when they have swallowed them, they will not so much as give them time to digest. Wheresoever Nature has placed men, she has provided them aliments: But we rather chuse to irritate hunger by expence, than to allay it at an easier rate. What is it that we plow the seas for; or arm ourselves against men and beasts? To what end do we toil, and labour, and pile bags upon bags? We may enlarge our fortunes, but we cannot our bodies; so that it does but spill and run over, whatsoever we take more than we can hold. Our fore-fathers (by force of whose virtues we are now supported in our vices) lived every jot as well as we, when they provided and dressed their own meat with their own hands; lodged upon the ground, and were not as yet come to the vanity of gold and gems: when they swore by their earthen gods, and kept their oath, though they died for it. Did not our consuls live more happily, when they cooked their own meat with those victorious hands that had conquered so many enemies, and won so many laurels? Did not they live more happily, I say, than our Apicius? (that corrupter of youth, and the plague of the age he lived in) who after he had spent a prodigious fortune upon his belly, poisoned himself for fear of starving, when he had yet 250,000 crowns in his coffers; which may serve to shew us, that it is the mind, and not the sum that makes any man rich: When Apicius with all the treasure counted himself in a state of beggary; and took poison to avoid that condition, which another would have prayed for. But why do we call it poison, which was the wholesomest draught of his life? His daily gluttony was poison rather, both to himself, and others. His ostentation of it was intolerable; and so was the infinite pains he took to mislead others, by his example; who went fast enough of themselves without driving.

† *Beasts would be happier than men, if sensuality were happiness.*

IT is a shame for a man to place his † felicity in those entertainments and appetites, that are stronger in brutes. Do not beasts eat with a better stomach? Have they not more satisfaction in their lusts?

And they have not only a quicker relish of their pleasures, but they enjoy them without either scandal or remorse. If sensuality were happiness, beasts were happier than men; but human felicity is lodged in the soul, not in the flesh. They that deliver themselves up to luxury are still either tormented with too little, or oppressed with too much; and equally miserable, by being either deserted, or overwhelmed: They are like men in a dangerous sea; one while cast a-dry upon a rock, and another while swallowed up in a whirlpool; and all this from the mistake of not distinguishing good from evil. The huntsman that with much labour and hazard takes a wild beast, runs as great a risque afterwards in the keeping of him; for many times he tears out the throat of his master; and it is the same thing with inordinate pleasures: The more in number, and the greater they are, the more general and absolute a slave is the servant of them. Let the common people pronounce him as happy as they please, he pays his liberty for his delights, and sells himself for what he buys.

Our diseases are as numberless as our dishes.

LET any man take a view of our kitchens, the number of our cooks, and the variety of our meats: Will he not wonder to see so much provision made for one belly?

We have as many diseases as we have cooks, or meats; and the service of the appetite is the study now in vogue. To say nothing of our train of lacqueys; and other troops of caterers and sewers. Good God! that ever one belly should employ so many people. How nauseous and fulsome are the surfeits that follow these excesses? Simple meats are out of fashion; and all are collected into one; so that the cook does the office of the stomach; nay, and of the teeth too, for the meat looks as if it were chewed before-hand; here is the luxury of all tastes in one

dish, and liker a vomit than a soup. From these compounded dishes arise compounded diseases, which require compounded medicines. It is the same thing with our minds, that it is with our tables; simple vices are curable by simple counsels, but a general dissolution of manners is hardly overcome: We are over-run with a public as well as with a private madness. The physicians of old understood little more than the virtue of some herbs to stop blood, or heal a wound: And their firm and heathful bodies needed little more, before they were corrupted by luxury and pleasure; and when it came to that once, their business was not to lay hunger, but to provoke it by a thousand inventions and sauces. That which was aliment to a craving stomach, is become a burden to a full one. From hence come paleness, trembling; and worse effects from crudities, than famine: A weakness in the joints, the belly stretched, suffusion of choler; the torpor of the nerves; and a palpitation of the heart. To say nothing of megrims, torments of the eyes, and ears: head-ach, gout, scurvy; several sorts of fevers, and putrid ulcers; with other diseases, that are but the punishment of luxury. So long as our bodies were hardened with labour, or tired with exercise, or hunting, our food was plain and simple; many dishes have made many diseases.

It is an ill thing for a man not to know the measure of his stomach; nor to consider, that men do many things in their drink, that they are ashamed of sober; drunkenness being nothing else but † a voluntary madness. It emboldens men to do all sorts of mischiefs; it both irritates wickedness and discovers it; it does not make men vicious, but it shews them to be so: It was in a drunken fit that Alexander killed Clytus. It makes him that is insolent, prouder; him that is cruel, fiercer; it takes away all shame. He that is peevish, breaks out presently into ill words, and blows. The leacher, without any regard to decency or scandal, turns up his whore in the market-place. A man's tongue trips, his head

† *Drunkenness is a voluntary madness.*

turns round; he staggers in his pace. To say nothing of the crudities and diseases that follow upon this distemper. Consider the publick mischiefs it has done. How many warlike nations, and strong cities that have stood invincible to attacks and sieges, has drunkenness overcome? Is it not a great honour to drink the company dead? a magnificent virtue to swallow more wine than the rest, and yet at last to be outdone by a hoghead? What shall we say of those men that invert the offices of day, and night? As if our eyes were only given us to make use of in the dark: Is it day? *It is time to go to bed.* Is it night? *It is time to rise.* Is it towards morning? *Let us go to supper.* When other people lie down, they rise; and lie till the next night to digest the debauch of the day before. It is an argument of clownery, to do as other people do. Luxury steals upon us by degrees; first it shews itself in a more than ordinary care of our bodies; it slips next into the furniture of our houses; and it gets then into the fabric, curiosity, and expence of the house itself. It appears, lastly, in the fantastical excesses of our tables. We change and shuffle our meats, confound our sauces, serve that in first, that uses to be last; and value our dishes, not for the taste, but for the rarity. Nay, we are so delicious, that we must be told when we are to eat or drink; when we are hungry, or weary; and we cherish some vices as proofs and arguments of our happiness. The most miserable mortals are they, that deliver themselves up to their palates, or to their lusts: The pleasure is short, and turns presently nauseous, and the end of it is either shame or repentance. It is a brutal entertainment, and unworthy of a man, to place his felicity in the service of his senses. As to the wrathful, the contentious, the ambitious, though the distemper be great, the offence has yet something in it that is manly: But, the basest of prostitutes are those that dedicate themselves wholly to lust; what with their hopes and fears, anxiety of thought, and perpetual disquiets, they are never well, full nor fasting.

WHAT a deal of business is now † made † *The folly and*
about our houses, and diet, which was at *vanity of luxu-*
first both obvious, and of little expence? *ry.*
Luxury led the way, and we have employ-
ed our wits in the aid of our vices. First, we desired super-
fluities; our next step was to wickedness; and in conclusion,
we delivered up our minds to our bodies, and so became
slaves to our appetites, which before were our servants, and
are now become our masters: What was it brought us to the
extravagance of embroideries, perfumers, tire-women, &c. We
passed the bounds of nature, and lashed out into superfluities,
inasmuch, that it is now a-days only for clowns and beggars
to content themselves with what is sufficient: Our luxury makes
us insolent, and mad. We take upon us like princes, and fly
out for every trifle, as if there were life and death in the case.
What a madness is it for a man to lay out an estate upon a
table, or a cabinet; a patrimony upon a pair of pendants, and
to inflame the price of curiosities, according to the hazard ei-
ther of breaking or losing them? To wear garments that will
neither defend a woman's body, nor her modesty; so thin,
that one would make a conscience of swearing she were not
naked: For she hardly shews more in the privacies of her a-
mour, than in public? How long shall we covet and oppress;
enlarge our possessions; and account that too little for one
man, which was formerly enough for a nation? And our luxu-
ry is as insatiable as our avarice: Where is that lake, that
sea, that forest, that spot of land, that is not ransacked to gra-
tify our palate! The very earth is burdened with our build-
ings; not a river nor a mountain escapes us. Oh that there
should be such boundless desires in our little bodies! Would
not fewer lodgings serve us? We lie but in one, and where
we are not, that is not properly ours. What with our hooks,
snarcs, nets, dogs, &c. we are at war with all living creatures;
and nothing comes amiss but what is either too cheap or too
common; and all this is to gratify a fantastical palate. Our
avarice, our ambition, our lusts, are insatiable; we enlarge our

possessions; swell our families; we rifle sea and land for matter of ornament, and luxury. A bull contents himself with one meadow; and one forest is enough for a thousand elephants; but the little body of a man devours more than all other living creatures. We do not eat to satisfy hunger, but ambition; we are dead while we are alive; and our houses are so much our tombs, that a man might write our *epitaphs* upon our very doors.

† *A voluptuous person cannot be a good man.*

A † VOLUPTUOUS person, in fine, can neither be a good man, a good patriot, nor a good friend; for he is transported with his appetites, without considering, that the lot of man is the law of Nature. A good man (like a good soldier) will stand his ground, receive wounds, glory in his scars, and in death itself, love his master for whom he falls; with that divine precept always in his mind, *follow good*. Whereas he that complains, laments, and repines, must yield nevertheless, and do his duty, though contrary to his inclination. How foolish therefore is it, for a man to chuse rather to be dragged than to follow; and vainly to contend with the calamities of human life? Whatever necessity obliges us to do, we should do generously: for it is absurd to strive with what we cannot avoid. We are born subjects, and to obey God is perfect liberty. He who does this shall be free, safe, and quiet: all his actions shall succeed as well as he can desire: and what can a man desire more than to want nothing from without, and to have every thing desirable within himself? Our minds are weakened by pleasures, which send us to fortune for our support, who gives us money only as the wages of slavery. We must stop our eyes and our ears. Ulysses had but one rock to be afraid of, but human life has many. Every city, nay, every man is one, and there is no trusting even to our nearest relations. Deliver me from the superstition of taking those things for felicities which are light and vain.



C H A P. XII.

Ambition and Avarice are restless and insatiable.

THE man that would be truly rich, must not enlarge his fortune, but lessen his appetite: for riches are both superfluous and mean, and almost as much to the looker on as the possessor. What is the end of ambition, and avarice; when at best, we are but stewards of what we falsely call our own? All those things which we pursue with so much hazard, and expence of blood, as well to keep, as to get; for which we break faith, and friendship; what are they, but the mere *deposita* of fortune? and not ours, but already inclined toward a new master. There is nothing our own, but that which we give to ourselves; and of which we have a certain, and inextinguishable possession. Avarice is so insatiable, that it is not in the power of liberality to content it: And our desires are so boundless, that whatever we get, is but in the way to getting more without end: And so long as we are solicitous for the increase of wealth, we lose the true use of it; and spend our time in putting out, calling in, and passing our accounts, without any substantial benefit, either to the world or to ourselves. What is the difference betwixt old men and children? The one cries for nuts and apples, and the other for gold and silver. The one sets up courts of justice; hears and determines; acquits and condemns in jest; and the other in earnest: the one makes houses of clay, and the other of marble: so that the works of old men are nothing in the world but the progress and improvement of children's errors: and they are to be admonished, and punished too like children; not in revenge for injuries received, but as a correction of injuries done, and to make them give over. There is some substance yet in gold and silver; but as to judgments, and statutes, procuration, and

countenance-money, these are only the visions, and dreams of avarice. Throw a crust of bread to a dog, he takes it open-mouthed, swallows it whole, and presently gapes for more: Just so do we with the gifts of fortune; down they go without chewing; and we are immediately ready for another chop. But what has avarice now to do with gold, and silver, that is so much outdone by curiosities of a far greater value? Let us no longer complain, that there was not a heavier load laid upon those precious metals; or that they were not buried deep enough; when we have found out ways by wax and parchments, and by bloody usurious contracts, to undo one another. It is remarkable, that Providence has given us all things for our advantage near at hand: but iron, gold and silver, (being both the instruments of blood and slaughter, and the price of it) nature has concealed in the bowels of the earth.

† *Avarice punishes itself.*

EVERY kind of avarice has some † punishment, over and above that which it is to itself. How miserable is it in the desire?

How miserable even in the attaining our ends? For money is a greater torment in the possession, than it is in the pursuit. The fear of losing it is a great trouble, the loss of it a greater, and it is made a greater yet by opinion. Nay, even in the case of no direct loss at all, the covetous man loses what he does not get. It is true, the people call the rich man a happy man, and wish themselves in his condition; but, can any condition be worse than that, which carries vexation and envy along with it? Neither is any man to boast of his fortune; his herds of cattle; his number of slaves; his land and palaces; for, comparing that which he has, to that which he farther covets, he is a beggar. No man can possess all things, but any man may despise them, and the contempt of riches is the nearest way to the gaining of them.

† *Money does all.*

SOME magistrates are made for † money, and those commonly are bribed with money. We are all turned merchants, and look not into the quality of things, but into the price of them; for reward we

are pious, and for reward again we are impious. We are honest, so long as we may thrive upon it; but if the devil himself give better wages, we change our party. Our parents have trained us up in an admiration of gold, and silver; and the love of it is grown up with us to that degree, that when we should shew our gratitude to heaven, we make presents of these metals. This it is that makes poverty look like a curse and a reproach, and the poets help it forward; the chariot of the sun must be all of gold; the best of times must be the golden age, and thus they turn the greatest misery of mankind into the greatest blessings.

NEITHER does avarice make us † only † *Avarice makes*
 unhappy in ourselves, but malevolent also *us not only miser-*
 to mankind. The foldier wishes for war; *able but ill-na-*
 the husbandman would have his corn dear; *tured also.*
 the lawyer prays for dissension; the physi-
 cian for a sickly year; he that deals in curiesities, for luxury
 and excess; and makes up his fortunes out of the corruptions
 of the age. High winds, and public conflagrations make work
 for the carpenter and bricklayer; and one man lives by the loss
 of another; some few, perhaps, have the fortune to be detect-
 ed, but they are all wicked alike. A great plague makes work
 for the sexton, and, in one word, whoever gains by the dead,
 has not much kindness for the living. Demades of Athens
 condemned a fellow that sold necessaries for funerals, upon
 proof, that he wished to make himself a fortune by his trade,
 which could not be but by a great mortality. But perhaps he
 did not so much desire to have many customers, as to sell dear,
 and buy cheap; besides that all of that trade might have been
 condemned as well as he. Whatsoever whets our appetites,
 flatters and depresses the mind, and by dilating it, weakens it;
 first blowing it up, and then filling and deluding it with va-
 nity.

To proceed now from the most prosti- † *The cares and*
 tute of all vices, † sensuality and avarice, *crimes that at-*
 to that which passes in the world for the *tend ambition.*

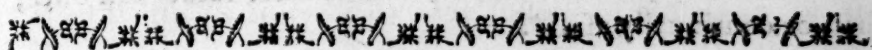
most generous, the thirst of glory and dominion. If they that run mad after wealth, and honour, could but look into the hearts of them that have already gained these points: How would it startle them to see those hideous cares and crimes that wait upon ambitious greatness? All those acquisitions that dazzle the eyes of the vulgar, are but false pleasures, slippery, and uncertain. They are atchieved with labour, and the very guard of them is painful. Ambition puffs us up with vanity and wind; and we are equally troubled, either to see any body before us, or no body behind us; so that we lie under a double envy; for whosoever envies another, is also envied himself. What matters it how far Alexander extended his conquests, if he was not satisfied with what he had? Every man wants as much as he covets; and it is lost labour to pour into a vessel that will never be full. He that had subdued so many princes and nations, upon the killing of Clytus, (one friend) and the loss of Hephestion, (another) delivered himself up to anger and sadness; and when he was master of the world, he was yet a slave to his passions. Look into Cyrus, Cambyfes, and the whole Persian line, and you shall not find so much as one man of them that died satisfied with what he had gotten. Ambition aspires from great things to greater, and propounds matters ever impossible, when it has once arrived at things beyond expectation. It is a kind of dropfy; the more a man drinks, the more he covets. Let any man but observe the tumults, and the crouds that attend palaces, what affronts must we endure to be admitted; and how much greater when we are in? The passage to virtue is fair, but the way to greatness is craggy, and it stands not only upon a precipice, but upon ice too; and yet it is a hard matter to convince a great man that his station is slippery, or to prevail with him not to depend upon his greatness; but all superfluities are hurtful. A rank crop lays the corn; too great a burden of fruit breaks the boughs; and our minds may be as well overcharged by an immoderate happiness. Nay, though we ourselves would be at rest, our fortune will not suffer it: The way that leads to ho-

nour and riches, leads to trouble; and we find the causes of our sorrows in the very objects of our delights. What joy is there in feasting, and luxury; in ambition, and a crowd of clients; in the arms of a mistress, or in the vanity of an unprofitable knowledge? These short and false pleasures deceive us; and, like drunkenness, revenge the jolly madness of *one* hour with the nauseous and sad repentance of *many*. Ambition is like a gulph, every thing is swallowed up in it, and buried; beside the dangerous consequences of it: For, that which one has taken from all, may be easily taken away again, by all, from one. It was not either virtue, or reason, but the mad love of a deceitful greatness, that animated Pompey in his wars, either abroad or at home. What was it but his ambition that hurried him to Spain, Africa, and elsewhere, when he was too great already, in every body's opinion but his own? And the same motive had Julius Cæsar, who could not, even then, brook a superior to himself, when the commonwealth had submitted unto two already. Nor was it any instinct of virtue that pushed on Marius, who in the head of an army was himself yet led on under the command of ambition: but he came at last to the deserved fate of other wicked men, and to drink himself of the same cup he had filled to others. We impose upon our reason, when we suffer ourselves to be transported with titles; for, we know, that they are nothing but a more glorious sound: and so for ornaments, and gildings, though there may be a lustre to dazzle our eyes, our understanding tells us yet, that it is only outside, and that the matter under it is only coarse and common.

I WILL never envy † those that the people call great and happy. A sound mind is not to be shaken with a popular, and vain applause; nor is it in the power of their pride to disturb the state of our happiness. An honest man is known now a-days by the dust he raises upon the way, and it is become a point of honour to over-run people, and keep all at a distance; though he that is

† *Wretched are these people that the world accounts great and happy.*

put out of the way, may perchance be happier than he that takes it. He that would exercise a power profitable to himself, and grievous to no body else, let him practise it upon his passions. They that have burnt cities, otherwise invincible, driven armies before them, and bathed themselves in human blood; after that they have overcome all open enemies, they have been subdued by their lust, by their cruelty, and without any resistance. Alexander was possessed with the madness of laying kingdoms waste. He began with Greece, where he was brought up; and there he quarried himself upon that in it which was best; he enslaved Lacedæmon, and silenced Athens: Nor was he content with the destruction of those towns, which his father Philip had either conquered or bought; but he made himself the enemy of human nature; and, like the worst of beasts, he worried what he could not eat. Felicity is an unquiet thing; it torments itself, and puzzles the brain. It makes some people ambitious, others luxurious; it puffs up some, and softens others; only (as it is with wine) some heads bear it better than others; but it dissolves all. Greatness stands upon a precipice; and if prosperity carries a man never so little beyond his poise, it over-bears and dashes him to pieces. It is a rare thing for a man in a great fortune, to lay down his happiness gently; it being a common fate, for a man to sink under the weight of those felicities, that raise him. How many of the nobility did Marius reduce to be herdsmen, and other mean offices? Nay in the very moment of our despising servants, we ourselves may be made such.



C H A P. XIII.

Hope and Fear are the Bane of human Life.

THAT man can never be perfectly happy, who runs the risque of disappointment; which is the case of every man that *fears* or *hopes* for any thing. For *hope* and *fear*, how distant soever they may seem to be the one from the other, they are both of them yet coupled in the same chain, as the guard and the prisoner; and the one treads upon the heel of the other. The reason of this is obvious, for they are passions that look forward, and are very solicitous for the future; only hope is the more plausible weakness of the two; which in truth, upon the main, are inseparable, for the one cannot be without the other; but where the *hope* is stronger than the *fear*, or the *fear* than the *hope*, we call it the one or the other: For, without *fear*, it were no longer *hope*, but *certainly*; as without *hope*, it were no longer *fear*, but *despair*. We may come to understand, whether our disputes are vain, or no, if we do but consider, that we are either troubled about the *present*, the *future*, or *both*. If the present, it is easy to judge, and the future is uncertain. It is a foolish thing to be miserable before-hand, for fear of misery to come; for a man loses the present which he might enjoy, in expectation of the future: Nay, the fear of losing any thing is as bad as the loss itself. I will be as prudent as I can, but not timorous, or careless: And I will bethink myself, and forecast what inconveniences may happen, before they come. It is true, a man may fear, and yet not be fearful; which is no more, than to have the affection of fear, without the vice of it; but yet a frequent admittance of it runs into a habit. It is a shameful and an unmanly thing to be doubtful, timorous and uncertain; to set one step forward, and another backward; and to be irresolute.

Can there be any man so fearful, that had not rather fall once, than be continually afraid.

† *If we fear all possibilities we shall always be wretched.*

WE shall always be miserable, † if we stand in fear of all possibilities; the best way, in such a case, is to drive out one nail with another, and a little to qualify fear with hope; which may serve to palliate a misfortune, tho' not to cure it. There is not any thing that we fear, which is so certain to come, as it is certain that many things which we do fear will not come; but we are loth to oppose our credulity when it begins to move us, and so to bring our fear to the test. Well! but, *what if the things we fear should come to pass?* Perhaps it will be the better for us. Suppose it to be death itself, why may it not prove the glory of my life? Did not poison make Socrates famous? And was not Cato's sword a great part of his honour? *Do we fear any misfortune to befall us?* We are not presently sure that it will happen. How many deliverances have come unlooked for? And how many mischiefs that we looked for, have never come to pass? It is time enough to lament when it comes, and in the *interim* to promise ourselves the best. What do I know but something or other may delay or divert it? Some have escaped out of the fire; others, when a house has fallen over their head, have received no hurt: One man has been saved when a sword was at his throat; another has been condemned, and out-lived his headsmen: So that ill fortune, we see, as well as good, has her levities: Peradventure it will be, peradventure not; and till it comes to pass, we are not sure of it: We do many times take words in a worse sense than they were intended, and imagine things to be worse taken than they are. It is time enough to bear a misfortune when it comes, without anticipating it.

† *Prepare for the worst.*

HE that would deliver himself from all apprehensions of the † future, let him first take for granted, that all fears will fall upon him; and then examine and measure the evil that he fears,

which he will find to be neither great, nor long. Beside, that the ills which he fears he may suffer, he suffers in the very fear of them. As in the symptoms of an approaching disease, a man shall find himself lazy and listless; a weariness in his limbs, with a yawning and shuddering all over him: So it is in the case of a weak mind; it fancies misfortunes, and makes a man wretched before his time. Why should I torment myself at present, with what perhaps may fall out fifty years hence? This humour is a kind of voluntary disease, and an industrious contrivance of our own unhappiness, to complain of an affliction that we do not feel. Some are not only moved with grief itself, but with the mere opinion of it; as children will start at a shadow, or at the sight of a deformed person. If we stand in fear of violence from a powerful enemy, it is some comfort to us, that whosoever makes himself terrible to others, is not without fear himself: The least noise makes a lion start; and the fiercest of beasts, whatsoever enrages them, makes them tremble too: A shadow, a voice, an unusual odour, rouses them.

THE things most to be feared I take to be three kinds; † *want, sickness, and those violences that may be imposed upon us by a strong hand.* The last of these has the greatest force, because it comes attended with noise and tumult: Whereas the in-commodities of poverty, and diseases are most natural, and steal upon us in silence, without any external circumstances of horror: but the other marches in pomp with fire and sword, gibbets, racks, hooks; wild beasts to devour us; stakes to empale us; engines to tear us to pieces; pitched bags to burn us in, and a thousand other exquisite inventions of cruelty. No wonder then, if that be most dreadful to us, that presents itself in so many uncouth shapes; and by the very solemnity is rendered the most formidable. The more instruments of bodily pain the executioner shews us, the more frightful he makes himself: For, many a man that would have encountered death

† *We are most afraid of want, sickness, and the violence of men in power.*

in any generous form, with resolution enough, is yet overcome with the manner of it. As for the calamities of hunger and thirst, inward ulcers, scorching fevers, tormenting fits of the stone, I look upon these miseries to be at least as grievous as any of the rest: only they do not so much affect the fancy, because they lie out of sight. Some people talk high of dangers at a distance; but (like cowards) when the executioner comes to do his duty, and shews them the fire, the ax, the scaffold, and death at hand, their courage fails them upon the very pinch, when they have most need of it. Sickneſs, (I hope) captivity, fire, are no new things to us; the falls of houses, funerals, and conflagrations, are every day before our eyes. The man that I supped with last night is dead before morning; why should I wonder then, seeing so many fall about me, to be hit at last myself: What can be greater madness than to cry out, *Who would have dreamed of this?* And why not, I beseech you? Where is that estate that may not be reduced to beggary; that dignity which may not be followed with banishment, disgrace, and extreme contempt; that kingdom that may not suddenly fall to ruin; change its master and be depopulated; that prince that may not pass the hand of a common hangman? That which is one man's fortune, may be another's; but the foresight of future calamities breaks the violence of them.



C H A P. XIV.

We are happy or miserable according to the true or false Estimate of Things.

THERE are many things which appear terrible by night, which the day turns into jest. There is nothing in labour, or even death to be afraid of; they are worse in imagination than in reality. It is our dread of them which makes them appear hard. Pains and misfortunes are to us what gob-

lins are to children; we are more afraid than hurt by them. We form our opinions upon trust, and err for the sake of company, imagining that best which has most competitors. We make a wrong calculation of things; we do not advise with nature but with opinion, which misleads us to a greater esteem of riches, honour and power, than they deserve. It is common for us to recommend and admire them, and a private error is presently turned into a public one. Great and small things are equally hard to be understood; we reckon many things *great* for want of understanding what really is so, and imagine other things *small*, which we often discover to be of the highest value. Vain minds only esteem vain things; accidents which we are so much afraid of are not in themselves so terrible, but our infirmities make them so; we rather consult what we hear than what we feel, without examining, opposing, or discussing the things we are afraid of; so that we either run off, or stand still, and tremble. When the mind and body are corrupted, it is no wonder if things prove troublesome; not because they really are so, but because we are foolish and dissolute: For we are so infatuated, that betwixt the common madness of men, and that which falls under the care of the physician, there is only this difference; one labours with a disease, the other with a false opinion.

THE Stoicks say that all those troubles which generally draw groans and ejaculations from us, are trifling and contemptible in themselves. But setting aside those high-flown expressions (however true) we shall discourse the point like ordinary men, and not make ourselves miserable sooner than it is necessary; for things which we are apprehensive are near, may possibly never happen. Some things affect us more than they should do, and other things too soon: and some things discompose us which should not give us the smallest uneasiness: So that we either create or enlarge our misfortunes. Let the first part remain as a matter in controversy, for what I look upon as trifling another person will think

Every man should make the best of his condition.

insupportable. How terrible does poverty appear to one man, and agreeable to others! A poor man who has nothing to lose, has nothing to be afraid of; and he who would enjoy himself with satisfaction, must be very poor indeed, or appear as if they were so. Some people are much dejected with pain and sickness: Whereas Epicurus with his last breath blessed his fate, in the sharpest torments of the stone. And so for banishment, which to one man is so grievous, and yet to another is no more than a bare change of place: A thing that we do every day for our health, pleasure; nay, and upon the account even of common business. How terrible is death to one man, which to another appears the greatest providence in nature; even towards all ages, and conditions? It is the wish of some, the relief of many, and the end of all. It sets the slave at liberty, carries the banished man home, and places all mortals upon the same level: Insomuch that life itself were a punishment without it. When I see tyrants, tortures, violences, the prospect of death is a consolation to me, and the only remedy against the injuries of this life.

NAY, so much are we mistaken in the true estimate of things, that we have hardly done any thing that we have not had reason to wish undone; and we have found the things we feared to be more desirable than those we coveted: † Our very prayers have been more pernicious than the curses of our enemies; and we must pray again to have our former prayers forgiven. Where is the wise man that wishes to himself the wishes of his mother, nurse, or tutor; the worst of enemies, with the intention of the best of friends? We are undone if their prayers be heard; and it is our duty to pray that they may not; for they are no other than well-meaning execrations. They take evil for good; and one wish fights with another: Give me rather the contempt of all those things whereof they wish me the greatest plenty. We are equally hurt by some that pray for us, and by others that curse us: The one imprints in us a false fear, and the other does us mis-

† Sometimes our very prayers are curses.

chief by a mistake. So that it is no wonder if mankind be miserable, when we are brought up from the very cradle under the imprecations of our parents. We pray for trifles without so much as thinking of the greatest blessings; and we are not ashamed many times to ask God for that which we should blush to confess to our neighbour.

IT is with us, as with an infant † that † *We are vain and my father* had in his family. She fell *wicked, and will blind on a sudden, and no body could per-* *not believe it.* suade her she was blind. *She could not endure the house* (she cried) *it was so dark,* and was still calling to go abroad. That which we laughed at in her, we find to be true in ourselves, we are covetous and ambitious; but the world shall never bring us to acknowledge it, and we impute it to the place: Nay, we are the worse of the two; for the blind fool called for a guide, and we wander about without one. It is a hard matter to cure those that will not believe they are sick. We are ashamed to admit a master, and we are too old to learn. Vice still goes before virtue; so that we have two works to do: We must cast off the one, and learn the other. By one evil we make way to another, and only seek things to be avoided, or those of which we are soon weary. That which seemed too much when we wished for it, proves too little when we have it; and it is not as some imagine, that felicity is greedy; but it is little, and narrow, and cannot satisfy us. That which we take to be very high at a distance, we find it to be but low, when we come at it. And the business is, we do not understand the real state of things: We are deceived by rumours; when we have gained the thing we aimed at, we find it to be either ill or empty; or perchance less than we expect, or otherwise perhaps great, but not good.



C H A P. XV.

The Blessings of Moderation and Temperance.

OUR heavenly Father has made such provision for us, that we have every thing necessary very cheap, or for nothing. It is true, the stomach craves, but a small matter satisfies it: a little bread and water is enough, all besides is superfluous. He who lives reasonably, will never be poor, and he who governs his life by opinion, will never be rich; for fancy is boundless, but nature is limited. As for lodging, meat, and cloaths, a small affair feeds the body, and as small an affair covers it: If people would be attentive to human nature, and not wish for superfluities, a cook would be as useless as a soldier: necessities are very easily acquired, and we give ourselves great trouble for excesses. We may defend ourselves from cold with skins of beasts, and we have natural grotto's to defend us from violent heats; or with a little clay and a few osiers we may defend ourselves from all seasons. It is only pride and curiosity which involves us in difficulties; Providence, has been kinder to us than to leave us to live by our wits, and to require the assistance of arts. If a man cannot be content without rich cloaths, furniture, statues, and plate, a number of servants, and all rarities, it is not the fault of Providence that he is not satisfied, but his own: His desires are insatiable, and this is a disease, not a thirst; and did he possess the whole world, he would still be a beggar. It is the mind which makes us rich and happy, in whatever situation we are; money is of no more consequence to it, than to the gods: If the religion is sincere, the ornaments are of no consequence: It is only covetousness and luxury that causes poverty to afflict us, for it is a small matter that is sufficient for us; and when we have provided against cold, hunger, and thirst,

the rest is but superfluous and vanity: there is no necessity for expence upon foreign delicacies, or the extravagancies of the kitchen. He who despises these things does not feel poverty: he is the better for being poor, because he is not able to go into excess; and that which a person *cannot* do, often looks as if he *would not*.

I AM ashamed to talk as if poverty had any need of consolation, when I consider the * moderation of past ages; for we are now come to such a degree of luxury, that a fair patrimony is too little for a meal. Homer had but one servant, Plato had three; and Zeno (the master of the masculine sect of Stoicks) had no servants at all. Scipio's daughters had their portions out of the common treasury, for they were left not worth a penny by their father: their husbands were happy in having the people of Rome for their father-in-law. Will any person after these examples reject poverty? Upon Diogenes's only servant running away from him, he was told where he was, and persuaded to fetch him back again. *What, says he, can Manes live without Diogenes, and not Diogenes without Manes?* and so let him go. The piety and moderation of Scipio has made his memory more venerable than his arms; and more yet after he left his country, than while he defended it: For matters were come to that pass, that either Scipio must be injurious to Rome, or Rome to Scipio. Coarse bread, and water, to a temperate man, is as good as a feast; and the very herbs of the field yield a nourishment to man, as well as to beasts. It was not by choice meats, and perfumes, that our forefathers recommended themselves, but by virtuous actions, and the sweat of honest, military, and of manly labours.

WHILE Nature lay in common, and all * her benefits were promiscuously enjoyed, what could be happier than the state of mankind, when people lived without avarice, or envy? What could be richer, than when there was not a poor man to be found in the world? So soon as this impartial bounty of Pro-

* *The state of innocence.*

vidence came to be restrained by covetousness, and that particulars appropriated that to themselves which was intended for all; then did poverty creep into the world; when some men by desiring more than came to their share, lost their title to the rest. A loss never to be repaired; for though we may come yet to get much, we once had all. The fruits of the earth were in those days divided among the inhabitants of it, without either want or excess. So long as men contented themselves with their lot, there was no violence; no engrossing, or hiding of those benefits for particular advantages, which were appointed for the community; but every man had as much care for his neighbour, as for himself. No arms, or bloodshed; no war, but with wild beasts: But under the protection of a wood or a cave, they spent their days without cares, and their nights without groans; their innocence was their security, and their protection. There was as yet no beds of state, no ornaments of pearl, or embroidery, nor any of those remorsees that attend them; but the heavens were their canopy; and the glories of them their spectacle. The motion of the orbs, the courses of the stars, and the wonderful order of Providence, was their contemplation: There was no fear of the house falling, or the rustling of a rat behind the hangings, they had no palaces then like cities; but they had open air, and breathing-room, crystal fountains, refreshing shades, the meadows dressed up in their native beauty, and such cottages as were according to nature, and wherein they lived contentedly, without fear either of losing or of falling. These people lived without either solicitude or fraud; and yet I must call them rather happy, than wise. That men were generally better before they were corrupted, than after, I do not in the least doubt; and I am apt to believe, that they were both stronger and hardier too; but their wits were not yet come to maturity; for nature does not give virtue; and it is a kind of art to become good: they had not as yet searched the bowels of the earth for gold, silver, or precious stones; and, so far were they from killing any man, as we do, for a spectacle, that they were

not as yet come to it, either in fear, or anger; nay, they spared the very fishes. But after all this, they were innocent-because they were ignorant; and there is a great difference betwixt not knowing how to offend, and not being willing to do it. They had, in that rude life, certain images and resemblances of virtue, but yet they fell short of virtue itself, which comes only by institution, learning, and study, as it is perfected by practice. It is indeed the end for which we were born, but yet it did not come into the world with us; and in the best of men, before they are instructed, we find rather the matter, and the seeds of virtue, than the virtue itself. It is the wonderful benignity of nature, that has laid open to us all things that may do us good, and only hid those things from us that may hurt us: As if she durst not trust us with gold, and silver; or with iron; which is the instrument of war, and contention for the other. It is we ourselves that have drawn out of the earth, both the *causes* and the *instruments* of our dangers: And we are so vain as to set the highest esteem upon those things to which nature has assigned the lowest place. What can be more coarse and rude in the mine, than these precious metals; or more slavish, and dirty, than the people that dig and work them? and yet they defile our minds more than our bodies? and make the possessor fouler than the artificer of them. Rich men, in short, are only the greater slaves. Both the one and the other wants a great deal.

He who eats only for hunger, and drinks only for thirst; stands upon his own legs, *A temperate life* and lives not by example but by reason; *is a happy one.* provides for necessity and use, not for pomp and vanity; is a happy man. We should curb our appetites; encourage virtue, and be obliged to ourselves rather than to fortune. Let my bed be clean and plain, and my cloaths also; my meat not expensive, nor with many waiters, and neither a burden to my body nor my purse; nor to go out the same way it came in. What is too little for luxury is plenty for nature. Satiety is the end of eating and drinking: of what

consequence is it therefore though one eats and drinks more and another less, as the one is not hungry nor the other thirsty? Epicurus, who limits pleasure to nature, as the Stoicks do virtue, is certainly right; and those who quote him, to authorise their luxury, do greatly mistake him, and only seek a good authority for a bad cause: for their pleasures of lust, gluttony, and sloth, have no connection at all with his precepts, or meaning. Indeed at first sight his philosophy appears effeminate, but when he is nearly examined he will be found to be a brave man in an effeminate dress.

† *Philosophers
should live as they
teach.*

I KNOW it is a common objection †, that these philosophers do not live according to their own rules; for they can flatter their superiors, keep up estates, be as much afflicted at the loss of friends, or fortune, as other people; feel reproaches as sensibly, eat and drink to excess, have magnificent houses and furniture, a number of servants, &c. And of what consequence is all this, if it were so? It is some degree of virtue for a man to condemn himself, and check his appetite. Though I do not live as I preach, observe it is of virtue I preach, and not of myself; and other people's vices do not give me so much offence as my own. All these objections were made to Plato, Epicurus, and Zeno: no virtue is so sacred as to escape malevolence. The Cynick Demetrius was a true instance of mortification and severity; he imposed upon himself, neither to possess any thing, nor to ask it: and yet he had this scorn put upon him, that his profession was not virtue but poverty. They blamed Plato for *asking* money; Aristotle for *receiving* it; Democritus for *neglecting* it; Epicurus for *wasting* it: but we would be happy if we could but imitate these men's vices; for if we know our own situation, we shall find work enough at home. But we resemble people who are making merry at a play, or a tavern, when their own houses are on fire, and they are ignorant of it. Even Cato was called a drunkard; but drunkenness will sooner be proved no crime, than Cato dishonest. They who destroy tem-

ples, and overturn altars, shew their good intention, though they cannot hurt the gods; and the same it is with those who attack the reputation of great men. If the professors of virtue are as the world say, covetous, lewd, and proud, what then are they who detest the name of it? but spiteful people do not want wit to abuse honest men than themselves. It is common for the multitude to bark at eminent men, as little dogs do at strangers; for they look upon other men's vices as upbraiding their own wickedness. It would be right to commend those that are good; if not, let us pass them over, but spare ourselves; for our rage is of no use.

WE are very ready to limit others, but *Even in plenty it is right to practise frugality.* loth to restrain ourselves; though we are sensible that a greater evil is often cured by a less, and a mind is often brought to virtue by necessity, which precepts had no effect upon. Let us try to eat upon a stool, to serve ourselves; to live moderately and accommodate our cloaths to the end they were designed for. Experiments of our moderation give us the best proof of our firmness and virtue. A well-governed appetite is a great part of liberty; and it is a blessing, that as a man cannot have all things he would chuse, he may avoid desiring what he has not. It is the business of temperance to over-rule us in our pleasures: she rejects some, qualifies others, and keeps them within bounds. What a pleasure is rest to a man who is tired, and meat to an hungry one! Our author says, I have learned by one journey how many superfluous things we have, and how easy they may be dispensed with, when we have them not. This is the second blessed day (says he) that my friend and I have travelled together: one waggon carries ourselves and servants; I lye upon my mattress on the ground: our diet suitable to our lodging, and always provided with our figs and our table-books. The muletier bare-footed, and the mules discover themselves to be alive only by their walking. I observe I am not willing to own myself in this equipage, when I happen to fall into better company, being ashamed of it;

this shews that I am not confirmed in these things which I approve of: I am not frugal myself yet; for he who is ashamed to be seen in a mean condition, would be vain of a splendid one. I value myself according to the opinion people have of me, and calmly renounce my principles: and I should rather lift up my voice to be heard by mankind, and tell them, *You are all mad; you fix your attention upon superfluities, and esteem no man for virtues.* One night I came home tired, and threw myself upon the bed, saying, *There is nothing ill that is well taken.* My baker says he has no bread, but offers to get some of my tenants, though he is afraid it is not good. I replied, it did not signify, I would stay till my appetite would be glad of it. It is prudent to practice temperance sometimes, and accustom ourselves to a little; for there are many difficulties that may oblige us to it. When we consider patrimony, how exactly do we enquire what every man is worth before we trust him a penny! We say, *such a man has a good estate, but it is much encumbered; an elegant house, but it was built with borrowed money: he has a large family, but if his debts were paid he would not be worth sixpence.* We should take the same method with other things, and examine what every person is worth. It is not sufficient to have a number of servants, great possessions, or a vast sum of money and jewels; notwithstanding all this, a man may be poor; only with this difference, one man borrows from the *Usurer*, and another from *Fortune*. Is the master the better for the fine gilding of his chariot?

* *The bravery and moderation of Fabricius.*

WE cannot finish this chapter with a better instance of generosity than that of Fabricius*. Pyrrhus endeavoured to tempt him with a sum of money to betray his country; and Pyrrhus his physician offered Fabricius, for a sum of money, to poison his master: but he was too brave to be overcome by gold, or to overcome by poison; he therefore despised the money, and advised Pyrrhus to beware of treachery. This happened in the heat of a licentious war. Fa-

abricius valued himself upon his poverty, and despised riches as much as poison. *Pyrrhus*, says he, *live by my friendship, and turn that to thy satisfaction which was formerly thy trouble*: which was saying, *That Fabricius could not be corrupted.*



C H A P. XVI.

Constancy of Mind gives a Man Reputation, and makes him happy notwithstanding all Misfortunes.

THE whole duty of man may be comprized in two points, *abstinence and patience; temperance in prosperity, and courage in adversity.* The former has been already treated of, therefore we shall now consider the latter.

A WISE man* will bear all injuries, * *A wise man* says *Epicurus*; but these things which *Epicurus* calls *injuries*, the *Stoicks* will not allow to be so. Now there is the same difference betwixt these two that we find betwixt two gladiators; the one receives wounds, but yet maintains his ground; the other tells the people, when he is in blood, that it is but a scratch, and will not allow any body to part them. An injury cannot be received, but it must be done; but it may be done, and yet not received: As a man may be in the water, and not swim, but if he swims, it is presumed that he is in the water. Or if a blow, or a shot be levelled at us, it may so happen, that a man may miss his aim, or some accident interpose that may divert the mischief. That which is hurt, is passive, and inferior to that which hurts it; but you will say, that *Socrates* was condemned, and put to death, and so received an injury; but I answer, that the tyrants *did* him an injury, and yet he *received* none. He that steals any thing from me, and hides it in my own house; though I have not lost it, yet he has stolen it. He that lies with his own wife,

and takes her for another woman; though the woman be honest, the man is an adulterer. Suppose a man gives me a draught of poison, and it proves not strong enough to kill me; his guilt is never the less for the disappointment. He that makes a pass at me, is as much a murderer, though I put it by, as if he struck me to the heart. It is the intention, not the effect that makes the wickedness. He is a murderer that has the will of killing, and slaying, before his hand is dipt in blood: as it is sacrilege, the very intention of laying violent hands upon holy things. If a philosopher be exposed to torments, the ax over his head, his body wounded, his guts in his hands, I will allow him to groan; for virtue itself cannot divest him of the nature of man; but if his mind stands firm, he has discharged his part. A great mind enables a man to maintain his station with honour? so that he only makes use of what he meets in his way, as a pilgrim that is very desirous of being at his journey's end.

It is the excellency of a great † mind
 † *A great man* to ask nothing, and to want nothing; and
neither asks any to say, *I will have nothing to do with For-*
thing, nor wants tune, that repulses Cato, and prefers Vati-
any thing. nius. He that quits his hold, and accounts

any thing good that is not honest, runs gaping after casualties, spends his days in anxiety, and vain expectation: That man is miserable. And yet it is hard, you will say, to be banished, or cast into prison; nay, what if it were to be burnt, or any other way destroyed? We have examples in all ages, and in all cases, of great men that have triumphed over all misfortunes. Metellus suffered exile resolutely; Rutilius cheerfully. Socrates disputed in the dungeon, and though he might have made his escape, refused it; to shew the world how easy a thing it was to subdue the two great terrors of mankind, death, and a jail. Or what shall we say of Mucius Scævola; a man only of military courage, and without the help either of philosophy or letters: Who, when he found that he had killed the secretary, instead of Porcenna (the

prince) burnt his right hand to ashes for the mistake; and held his arm in the flame, until it was taken away by his very enemies. Porfenna did more easily pardon Mucius for his intent to kill him, than Mucius forgave *himself* for missing of his aim. He might have done a luckier thing, but never a braver.

DID not Cato, in the last night of his * *Cato's constancy.*
 * life, take Plato to bed with him; with his sword at his bed-head; the one, that he might have death at his will; the other, that he might have it in his power; being resolved that no man should be able to say, either that he killed, or that he saved Cato? So soon as he had composed his thoughts, he took his sword; *Fortune*, says he, *I have hitherto fought for my country's liberty, and for my own, and only that I might live free among freemen; but the cause is now lost, and Cato safe.* With that word he cast himself upon his sword; and after the physicians, that pressed in upon him, had bound up his wound, he tore it open again, and so expired with the same greatness of soul that he lived. But these are the examples, you will say, of men famous in their generations. Let us but consult history, and we shall find, even in the most effeminate of nations, and the most dissolute of times, men of all degrees, ages and fortunes; nay, even women themselves, that have overcome the fear of death: Which, in truth, is so little to be feared, that duly considered, it is one of the greatest benefits in nature. It was as great an honour for Cato, when his party was broken, that he himself stood his ground, as it would have been if he had carried the day, and settled an universal peace: For, it is an equal prudence, to make the best of a bad game, and to manage a good one. The day he was *repulsed*, he *played*; and the night that he *killed* himself, he *read*, as valuing the loss of his life, and the missing of an office at the same rate. People, I know, are very apt to pronounce upon other men's infirmities, by the measure of their own, and to think it impossible, that a man should be content to be burnt, wounded, killed, or

shackled, though in some cases, he may. It is only for a great mind to judge of great things; for otherwise that which is our infirmity will seem to be another body's; as a straight stick in the water appears to be crooked: He that yields, draws upon his own head his own ruin; for we are sure to get the better of fortune, if we do not struggle with her. Fencers and wrestlers we see what blows and bruises they endure, not only for honour, but for exercise. If we turn our backs once we are defeated, and pursued: That man only is happy, that draws good out of evil; that stands fast in his judgment, and unmoved with any external violence: or however, so little moved, that the keenest arrow in the quiver of Fortune, is but as the prick of a needle to him rather than a wound: And all her other weapons fall upon him only as hail upon the roof of a house, that crackles and skips off again, without the least damage to the inhabitant.

** The greatest evil in adversity is the submitting to it.*

A GENEROUS, and a clear sighted young man will esteem * it a happiness to encounter ill-fortune. It is nothing for a man to hold up his head in a calm; but to maintain his post, when all others have quitted their ground, and there to stand upright, where other men are beaten down, this is divine and praise-worthy. What ill is there in torments, or in those things which we commonly account grievous crosses? The great evil is the want of courage, the bowing and submitting to them, which can never happen to a wise man: for he stands upright under any weight; nothing that is to be born displeases him; he knows his strength; and whatsoever may be any man's lot, he never complains of, if it be his own. Nature, he says, deceives nobody; she does not tell us whether our children shall be fair, or foul; wise or foolish, good subjects, or traitors; nor whether our fortune shall be good or bad. We must not judge of a man by his ornaments: but strip him of all the advantages, and the impostures of fortune; nay, of his very body too; and look into his mind. If he can see a naked sword at his eyes

without so much as winking; if he make it a thing indifferent to him, whether his life go out at his throat, or at his mouth; if he can hear himself sentenced to torments, or exiles; and under the very hand of the executioner, say thus to himself, *All this I am provided for, and it is no more than a man, that is to suffer the fate of humanity.* This is the temper of mind that speaks a man happy; and without this, all the confluences of external comforts signify no more than the personating of a king upon the stage; when the curtain is dropt, we are players again. Not that I pretend to exempt a wise man out of the number of men, as if he had no sense of pain. But I reckon him as compounded of body and soul: The body is irrational, and may be galled, burnt, tortured: but the rational part is fearless, invincible, and not to be shaken. This it is that I reckon upon as the supreme good of man; which, until it be perfected, is but an unsteady agitation of thought; and in the perfection an immoveable stability. It is not in our contentions with fortune, as in those of the theatre, where we may throw down our arms, and pray for quarter: But here we must die firm and resolute. There needs no encouragement to those things which we are inclined to by a natural instinct, as the preservation of ourselves with ease, and pleasure; but, if it comes to the trial of our faith by torments, or of our courage by wounds, these are difficulties that we must be armed against by philosophy and precept: And yet all this is no more than what we were born to; and no matter of wonder at all; so that a wise man prepares himself for it: as expecting that whatsoever *may be, will be.* My body is frail, and liable, not only to the impressions of violence, but to afflictions also, that naturally succeed our pleasures. Full meals bring crudities: Whoring and drinking make the hands to shake, and the knees to tremble. It is only the surprize, and newness of the thing, which makes the misfortune terrible, which by premeditation might be made easy to us. For, that which some people make light by sufferance, others do by fore-sight. Whatsoever is necessary, we must bear patiently. It is no new

thing to die; no new thing to mourn, and no new thing to be merry again. Must I be *poor*? I shall have company; In *banishment*, I will think myself born there; if I *die*, I shall be no more sick; and it is a thing I can do but once.

* *Let no man be amazed at what he is born to.*

WE should never be surpris'd at any thing * we are born to; for no man has reason to complain, where we are all in the same condition. He that escapes might have suffered; and it is but equal to submit to the law of mortality. We must undergo the colds of winter, the heats of summer, the distempers of the air, and diseases of the body. A wild beast meets us in one place, and a man that is more savage, in another; we are here assaulted by fire, there by water. Demetrius was reserved by Providence, for the age he lived in, to shew, that neither the times could corrupt him, nor he reform the people. He was a man of an exact judgment, steady to his purpose, and of a strong eloquence; not finical in his words, but his sense was masculine and vehement. He was so qualified in his life and discourse, that he served both for an example, and a reproach. If fortune should have offered that man the government, and the possession of the whole world, upon condition not to lay it down again; I dare say he would have refused it: and thus have expostulated the matter with you. *Why should you tempt a free-man to put his shoulder under a burden; or an honest man to pollute himself with the dregs of mankind? Why do you offer me the spoils of princes, and of nations, and the price not only of your blood, but of your souls?* It is the part of a great mind to be temperate in prosperity, resolute in adversity; to despise what the vulgar admire; and to prefer a mediocrity to an excess. Was not Socrates oppressed with poverty, labour, nay, and the worst of wars in his own family, a fierce and turbulent woman to his wife; Were not his children indocible, and like their mother? After seven and twenty years spent in arms, he fell under the slavery of the *thirty tyrants*, and most of them his bitter enemies: He came at last to be sentenced

as a violater of religion, a corrupter of youth, and a common enemy to God and man. After this he was imprisoned, and put to death by poison, which was all so far from working upon his mind, that it never so much as altered his countenance. We are to bear ill accidents, as unkind seasons, distempers, or diseases; and why may we not reckon the actions of wicked men even among those accidents? Their deliberations are not counsels, but frauds, snares, and inordinate motions of the mind; and they are never without a thousand pretences, and occasions of doing a man mischief. They have their informers, their knights of the post; they can make an interest with powerful men, and one may be robbed as well upon the bench, as upon the high-way. They lie in wait for advantages, and live in perpetual agitation, betwixt hope and fear; whereas he that is truly composed, will stand all shocks, either of violences, flatteries, or menaces, without perturbation. It is an inward dread, that makes us anxious about what we hear abroad.

It is absurd to attribute either good or ill to † fortune: But the matter of it we may; and we ourselves are the occasion of it, being, in effect, the artificers of our own happiness, or misery: For the mind is above fortune; if that be evil, it makes every thing else so too: But if it be right, and sincere, it corrects what is wrong, and mollifies what is hard, with modesty and courage. There is a great difference among those that the world calls wise men. Some take up private resolutions of opposing fortune, but they cannot go through with them; for they are either dazzled with splendor on the one hand, or affrighted with terrors on the other. But there are others that will close and grapple with fortune, and still come off victorious. Mucius overcame the fire; Regulus, the gibbet; Socrates, poison: Rutilius, banishment; Cato, death; Fabricius, riches; Tubero, poverty; and Sextius, honours. But there are some again so delicate, that they cannot so much as bear a scandalous report; which is the

same thing as if a man should quarrel for being jostled in a crowd, or dashed as he walks in the streets. He that has a great way to go, must expect a slip, to stumble, and to be tired. To the luxurious man, frugality is a punishment; labour and industry, to the sluggard; nay, study itself is a torment to him: Not that these things are hard to us by nature, but we ourselves are vain and irresolute: Nay, many of us are surpris'd how any man can live without wine, or endure to rise so early in a morning.

‡ *Virtue is glorious in extremities.*

‡ A BRAVE man must expect to be tossed; for he is to steer his course in the teeth of fortune, and to work against wind and weather. In suffering of torments, though there appears but one virtue, a man exercises many. That which is most eminent is patience (which is but a branch of fortitude.) But there is prudence also in the choice of the action, and in the bearing what we cannot avoid: and there is constancy in bearing it resolutely: And there is the same concurrence of several virtues in other generous undertakings. When Leonidas was to carry his 300 men into the straits of Thermopylæ, to put a stop to the vast army of Xerxes: *Come, fellow-soldiers, says he, eat your dinner here, as if you were to sup in another world.* And they answered his resolution. How plain and imperious was that short speech of Cæditius to his men upon a desperate action; and how glorious a mixture was there in it both of bravery and prudence? *Soldiers, says he, it is necessary for us to go, but it is not necessary for us to return.* This brief and pertinent harangue, was worth ten thousand of the frivolous cavils, and distinctions of the schools, which rather break the mind than fortify it; and when it is once perplexed, and pricked with difficulties and scruples, there they leave it. Our passions are numerous, and strong, and not to be mastered with quirks, and tricks, as if a man should undertake to defend the cause of God and man with a bulrush. It was a remarkable piece of honour and policy together, that action of Cæsar's, upon the taking of Pompey's cabinet at the battle of

Pharfalia: It is probable that the letters in it might have discovered who were his friends, and who his enemies; and yet he burnt it without so much as opening it; Esteeming it the noblest way of pardoning, to keep himself ignorant both of the offender, and of the offence. It was a brave presence of mind also in Alexander, who, upon advice that his physician Philip intended to poison him, took the letter of advice in one hand, and the cup in the other; delivering Philip the letter to read, while he himself drank the potion.

SOME people imagine, that death gives a man courage to support pain, and that pain fortifies a man against death: But I say rather that a wise man depends upon himself against both, and that he does not either suffer with patience in hopes of death, or die willingly because he is weary of life; but he bears the one, and waits for the other; and carries a divine mind through all the accidents of human life. He looks upon faith and honesty, as the most sacred good of mankind, and neither to be forced by necessity, nor corrupted by reward: Kill, burn, tear him to pieces, he will be true to his trust: And the more a man labours to make him discover a secret, the deeper he will hide it. Resolution is the impregnable defence of human weakness, and it is a wonderful providence that attends it. Horatius Cocles opposed his single body to the whole army, till the bridge was cut down behind him, and then he leaped into the river with his sword in his hand, and came off safe to his party. There was a fellow questioned about a plot upon the life of a tyrant, and put to the torture to declare his confederates: He named, by one, and one, all the tyrant's friends that were about him; and still as they were named, they were put to death: The tyrant asked him at last, if there were any more; Yes, says he, you yourself were in the plot; and now you have never another friend living: Upon which the tyrant cut the throats of his own guards. *That man alone is happy who is the master of himself, and triumphs*

over the fear of death, by whom even the greatest heroes in the universe have been subdued.



CHAP. XVII.

Our Happiness depends greatly upon the Choice of our Company.

CONVERSATION is a great part of the comfort of life. Good offices, concord, and human society, is like the working of a stone arch; all would fall if one piece did not support another. Let us have a tenderness for blood; for it is not sufficient to avoid doing hurt, we must assist each other. It is our duty to relieve the distressed, to put the wanderer in his way, and to divide our bread with the hungry. This is doing service to ourselves, as we are only several members of one great body. Nay, we are all relations formed of the same materials, and designed for the same purpose. This obliges us to a natural affection; and the other, to live with a respect to justice and equity. It is natural to have a love for society; but to be attentive to the choice of our company is a matter of prudence and virtue. Great and noble examples induce us to act nobly; and an account of great and noble souls inspires us with generous thoughts. It makes a man impatient to do something praise-worthy, that may be of service to the world; such as defending the weak, relieving the oppressed, punishing the wicked. Being conscious of giving a good example is a blessing, and it is the greatest favour a man can do the age he lives in. To avoid bad company, and bad examples, is the most effectual way to shun wickedness. He who converses with proud men, shall be puffed up; a lascivious man makes his acquaintance the same. We should never have bad examples near us; for they, with ease and pleasure, are undoubtedly great corrupters of manners. Stony

ground hardens the horse's hoof: The mountaineer makes the best soldier: The miner makes the best pionier; and hard discipline strengthens the mind. In all extremes of good or bad fortune, always have recourse to great examples, that have contemned both. *Those who teach by their lives and actions are the best instructors.*

As a bad air may hurt a good constitution, so may † bad example hurt a good man. Indeed there are some places that † *Avoid dissolute places as well as loose company.* have a sort of privilege to be licentious, and where luxury and dissolution of manners appear to be lawful, examples from great people give authority and excuse to wickedness. We should avoid all those places as dangerous to our manners. Even Hannibal was unmanned by the looseness of Campania, and though he was a conqueror by his arms, he was overcome by his pleasures. I would as soon live among butchers as cooks; not but that a man may be temperate in any place; but it is disagreeable to see drunken men staggering up and down from place to place, and spectacles of lust, luxury, and excess. If the victorious Hannibal could not resist it, what shall become of us, who are so ready to give into lusts? It is a harder task to resist an enemy in the breast than an enemy in the field: If he loses ground, his hazard is greater, and his duty constant; he has no place or time for rest. If I give way to pleasure, I must also give way to grief, labour, poverty, ambition, and anger, till my lusts and misfortunes tear me to pieces. There is nothing does more hurt to mankind than mercenary masters of philosophy, that do not live as they teach; they are a shame to virtue. How can it be expected that a ship should steer a fortunate course, when the pilot is not attentive? It is common to learn to do ill ourselves, before we instruct others to do so: But he must be very wicked who has other people's wickedness as well as his own.

† *Practical philosophers are the best company.*

THE best conversation we can have is with philosophers †; I mean such as teach matter, not words: That preach up to us necessary things, and engage us to practice them. There can be no peace in life without a contempt of all events. A good companion is the best thing to instill good thoughts and dispositions into the heart. The force of example touches the heart; and the frequent hearing and seeing a good man gives us pleasure, and suggests agreeable reflections; such as are common when a person enters a holy place. I will be more careful with *whom* I eat and drink, than *what*; for the table is a manger without a friend. Writing answers a good purpose, but conversation is better: People give great credit to their ears, and are more apt to take impression from example than advice. Had Cleanthes not been with Zeno in his privacies, and observed attentively whether he preached as he taught, he never would have hit him so to the life. Plato got more from the *manners* of Socrates, than from his *words*; and it was the *company* and familiarity of Epicurus which made Metrodorus, Hermachus, and Polyænus so famous, more than his school.

The more company the more danger.

THOUGH we avoid solitude, and desire company, by instinct, we should also consider, that the more company we keep, there is the more danger. Not one man of an hundred can depend upon himself. Though company may not alter us, it may interrupt us; and it is losing a great deal of a short life, to be stopped in the way; and yet our unsteadiness makes it still shorter. What haste would we make if an enemy were at our heels? and death is, yet we never think of it. There is no trusting easy and tender natures among the people, as it is most likely they will go over to the major party. It might possibly shake the constancy of Socrates, Cato, Lælius, or any of us, even when our resolutions are most firm, to withstand the shock of vice, that presses upon us with a sort of public authority. One single example of cove-

tousness and luxury may do a great deal of harm. One luxurious appetite may be the cause of a great many. A rich neighbour causes envy, and a fleering companion stirs up ill-nature wherever he goes. When those people expose themselves to popular violence, what will become of them? It is bad either way; whether they comply or quarrel with the multitude. The best method is to retire, and associate only with those who may be benefited by us and we by them. To speak freely, I cannot trust myself in much company: When ever I go abroad, I do not come home the same person I went out. Something that I had put right is discomposed: Some passion which I had conquered gets head again. It is with our minds as with our bodies; after a long sickness we grow so tender that the least air endangers us of a relapse. It is not strange that a numerous conversation is dangerous; there is hardly one man but his behaviour, example, or conversation will engage us to him, and insensibly infect us with some vice; and the more people the greater the danger. Beware of public shews, where wickedness insinuates itself with pleasure, and particularly avoid scenes of cruelty and blood; avoid those who are constantly complaining there can be no peace, but there may be faith and kindness. We generally set a guard upon people who are sad and fearful, for their own sakes, lest their being alone should be of bad consequence: Particularly imprudent people, who are always contriving mischief, either for themselves or other people. So much for the choice of a *companion*, let us now proceed to that of a *friend*.



C H A P. XVIII.

The Happiness of Friendship.

A FIRM and gentle friendship is certainly the most delightful happiness. It softens our cares, dispels our sorrows, and comforts us in all extremities. Were there no other satisfaction from it but the bare exercise of a generous virtue, even that reason is sufficient to make it desirable. It is also an effectual antidote against all calamities, even the fear of death.

† *Every man who visits us is not our friend.*

WE must not confound visits of ceremony † and commerce with those of united affection. Caius Graccus and Livius Drusus were the first who introduced the custom of separating their visitants: Some were admitted into their closets, others taken into the anti-chamber, and some remained in the hall, or the court. So that they had their first, second and third-rate friends; but none of them esteemed as true, being only called friends in course, as we salute strangers with some title of respect. He will find himself much mistaken, who expects to find a friend in a palace, or tries him at a feast: You cannot depend upon men who take their compliment in their turn.

† *The choice of a friend.*

IT is a very difficult matter to find a true friend. † In the first place, take care that he be virtuous; for vice is infectious, and the sick and sound should not be trusted together: Chuse a wise man for your friend, if you can find one: But he who is the least ill is the best; and the greatest degree of human prudence is only an excusable folly. That friendship where men's affections are cemented by an equal and common love of goodness, can neither be dissolved by hope, fear, nor any

private interest; we carry it to our graves with us, and lay down our lives for it with pleasure. Paulina's good and mine (says our author) were so wrapt up together, that in consulting her comfort, I provided for my own: And when I could not persuade her to take less care of me, she persuaded me to take more care of myself. It is a matter of dispute with some people, whether the greater pleasure is in the enjoyment of an old friendship, or regaining a new one: The pleasure is in preparing a friendship, and possessing it: It is as with sowing and reaping; in one case the pleasure is in the hope of his labour, and in the other, in the fruit of it. My conversation is among my books, but in the letters of a friend I think I have his company; and in answering them, I think I am speaking. In short, a friend is a heart, an eye, a tongue, and a hand, at all distances. When friends see each other personally, they do not appear the same as when they are separate, where the meditation dignifies the prospect: But they are in a great measure absent, even when present. Consider their nights apart; their private studies; their separate employments, and necessary visits, and when separate, they are almost as much together as when present. A real friend is an estimable treasure. He who is a friend to mankind, is a friend to himself. Even in my studies, the greatest pleasure I take in what I learn is to teach it to others: For I think there is no pleasure in possessing any thing without a partner: Nay, if wisdom itself were offered me, upon condition only of keeping it to myself, I should certainly not accept of it.

LUCILIUS tell me, that he was written to by a † friend, but cautions me withal, not to say any thing to him of the affair in question; for he himself stands upon the same guard.

† *Friendships must be unreserved.*

What else is this than affirming and denying the same thing at once; in giving a man the appellation of a friend, when we dare not trust him as our own soul? You may deliberate as much as you please before the league is struck; but no doubtings or jealousies after: for friendship must be unreserved. It

is the greatest absurdity to love a man before we know him, and not to care for him after. It requires time to consider of a friendship; but the resolution once taken, entitles him to my very heart: I look upon my thoughts to be as safe in his breast, as in my own; I shall, without any scruple, make him the confident of my most secret cares and counsels. It goes a great way towards making a man faithful, to let him know that you think him so; and he that does but so much as suspect that I will deceive him, gives me a kind of right to deceive him. When I am with my friend, methinks I am alone, and as much at liberty to speak any thing as to think it; and as our hearts are one, so must our convenience be: For friendship lays all things in common, and nothing can be good to the one, that is ill to the other. I do not speak of such a community as to destroy one another's propriety; but as the father and mother have two children, not one a piece but each of them two.

† *A generous
friendship.*

LET us be particularly sure that our kindness † be rightly founded; for where there is any other invitation to friendship itself, that friendship will be bought and sold. He derogates from the majesty of it, that makes it only dependent upon good fortune. It is a narrow consideration for a man to please himself in the thought of a friend, because, says he, *I shall have one to assist me sick, in prison, or in want.* A brave man should rather take delight in the contemplation of doing the same offices for another. He that loves a man for his own sake is in an error. A friendship of interest can last no longer than the interest itself; and this is the reason that men in prosperity are so much followed, but when in adversity, are shunned by every one. Temporary friends will never stand the test. One man is forsaken for fear or profit; another is betrayed. It is a negotiation, not a friendship that has an eye to advantages: Only through the corruption of times, that which was formerly a friendship, is now become a design upon a booty: Alter your will, and you lose your friend. But my end of friendship is to have one dearer to me than myself;

and for the saving of whose life, I would cheerfully resign my own; taking this along with me, that only wise men can be friends; others are but companions; and that there is a great difference also betwixt love and friendship; the one may sometimes hurt us; the other always does us good; for one friend is helpful to another in all cases, as well in prosperity as affliction. We receive comfort even at a distance, from those we love, but then it is light and faint: Whereas presence and conversation touches us to the quick, especially if we find the man we love to be such a person as we wish.

PRINCES commonly reproach the living by praising the dead; and commend those people for speaking truth, from whom there is no longer any danger of hearing it. This was the case with Augustus. He was forced to banish his daughter Julia for her common and prostituted impudence; and still, upon fresh informations, he was frequently heard to say, *If Agrippa and Mecenas had been now living, this would not have happened.* But yet where the fault lay may be a question; for perchance it was his own, that would rather complain for the want of them, than seek for others as good. The Roman losses by war, and by fire, Augustus could quickly supply and repair; but he lamented his whole life after for the loss of *two friends*. When Xerxes (a vain and foolish prince) made war upon Greece, he was told by one, *That it would never come to a battle;* by another, *That he would find nothing but empty countries and cities, for they would not so much as stand the fame of his coming.* Others soothed him in the opinion of his *immense numbers;* and they all concurred to puff him up to his own destruction. Demaratus alone advised him not to put too much confidence in his numbers, for they would prove more a burden than an advantage; and that three hundred men in the straits of the mountains would be sufficient to give a check to his whole army: And that such an accident would undoubtedly turn his prodigious numbers to his confusion. It afterwards happened as he foretold, and he was thanked for his

*The loss of a friend
is irreparable.*

fidelity. How unhappy must this prince have been, who had but one subject to tell him truth, amongst so many thousands!



C H A P. XIX.

He must take an Account of his Time, that would be happy.

IN the distribution of human life, we find, that a great part of it passes away in *evil-doing*; a greater yet in doing just *nothing at all*; and effectually the whole in doing things *we have no business with*. We spend some hours in ceremony, and servile attendances; some in our pleasures, and the remainder goes to waste. How many hours do we waste in hopes and fears; love and revenge; in balls, treats, making of interests; suing for offices, soliciting of causes, and slavish flatteries! Most of people complain of the shortness of life; as if the time we have were not sufficient for our duties. But it is with our lives as with our estates, a good husband makes a little go far; whereas let the revenue of a prince fall into a prodigal's hand, and it is presently gone. So that the time allotted us, if it were well employed, were abundantly enough to answer all the ends and purposes of mankind. But we squander it away in avarice, drink, sleep, luxury, ambition; fawning addresses, envy, rambling voyages; impertinent studies, change of counsels, and the like: and when our portion is spent, we find the want of it, though we give no head to it in the passage: Infomuch, that we have rather *made* our life short than *found* it so. You shall have some people perpetually playing with their fingers, whistling, humming, and talking to themselves; and others spend their time in the composing, hearing, or reciting of songs, and lampoons. How many precious mornings do we spend in consultation with barbers, tailors, and milleners, patching, and painting, betwixt the

comb and the glass? A council must be called upon every hair we cut, and one curl amiss, is as much as a body's life is worth. The truth is, we are more solicitous about our dress, than our manners; about the order of our periwigs than that of the government. At this rate, let us but discount, out of a life of a hundred years, that time which has been spent upon popular negotiations, domestic broils, saunterings up and down to no purpose; diseases that we have brought upon ourselves; and this large extent of life will not amount to perhaps the minority of another man. It is a *long being*, but perhaps a *short life*; and what is the reason of all this? We live as if we were never to die, and without any thought of human frailty; when yet the very moment we bestow upon this man, or thing, may happen to be our last. But the greatest loss of time is delay, and expectation, which depends upon the future. We let go the present, which we have in our own power, we look forward to that which depends upon fortune, and so quit a certainty for an uncertainty. We should do by time, as we do by a torrent, make use of it while we have it, for it will not last always.

THE calamities of human nature may be divided into † the fear of *death*, and the *miseries* and *errors* of life. And it is the great work of mankind, to master the one, and to rectify the other: And so live, as neither to make life irksome, nor death terrible to us. It should be our care, before we are old, to live well, and when we are so, to die well; that we may expect our end without sadness; for it is the duty of life to prepare ourselves for death; and we are every hour reminded of our mortality: Time runs on, and all things have their fate, though it lies in the dark. The period is certain to nature, but what am I the better for it, if it be not so to me? We propound travels, arms, adventures, without ever considering that death lies in the way. Our time is set, and none of us know how near it is; but we are all of us agreed that the time of it is

† *That man to whom life is irksome, or death terrible, can never be happy.*

unchangeable. Why are we surpris'd at that happening to us to-day, which might have befallen us any moment since we were born? Let us therefore live as if every moment were to be our last; and set our accounts right, every day that passes over our heads. We are not ready for death, and therefore we fear it, because we are ignorant what will become of us when we are no more; and that consideration strikes us with an inexpressible terror. The way to avoid this distraction, is to contract our business, and our thoughts: When the mind is once settled, a day, or an age, is all one to us; and the series of time, which is now our trouble, will be then our delight: for he that is steadily resolv'd against all uncertainties shall never be disturbed with the variety of them. Let us therefore make haste to live, since every day is a new life to a wise man; for he has done his business the day before, and so prepared himself for the next, that if it be not his last, he knows yet that it might have been so. That man alone who is ready and willing to quit life when required, enjoys the true taste of life.

† *We are more careful of our fortunes than of our lives.*

THE wit of man is not able to express the † blindness of human folly, in taking so much more care of our fortunes, our houses, and our money, than we do of our lives; every body breaks in upon the one *gratis*, but we betake ourselves to fire and sword, if any man invades the other. There is no dividing in the case of patrimony, but people share our time with us at pleasure: So profuse are we of that only thing, whereof we may be honestly covetous. It is a common practice to ask an hour or two of a friend, for such or such a business, and then it is as easily granted; both parties only considering the occasion, and not the thing itself. They never put time to account, which is the most valuable of all precious things: But because they do not see it, they reckon upon it as nothing; and yet these easy men, when they come to die, would give the whole world for those hours again, which they so inconsiderately cast away before; but they are past recovery. If they could number their days.

our houses and our money, than we do of our lives: every body breaks in upon the one *gratis*, but we betake ourselves to fire and sword, if any man invades the other. There is no dividing in the case of patrimony, but people share our time with us at pleasure: So profuse are we of that only thing, whereof we may be honestly covetous. It is a common practice to ask an hour or two of a friend, for such or such a business, and it is as easily granted; both parties only considering the occasion, and not the thing itself. They never put time to account, which is the most valuable of all precious things: But because they do not see it, they reckon it as nothing; and yet these easy men, when they come to die, would give the whole world for those hours again, which they so inconsiderately cast away before; but they are past recovery. If they could number their days that are yet to come, as they can those that are already past, how would those very people tremble at the apprehension of death, though a hundred years hence, that never so much as think of it at present, though they know not but it may take them away the next immediate minute? It is an usual saying, *I would give my life for such or such a friend*, when at the same time we do give it, without so much as thinking of it: Nay, when that friend is never the better for it, and we ourselves the worse. Our time is set, and day and night we travel on; there is no baiting by the way, and it is not either in the power of prince, or people to prolong it. Such is the love of life, that even those decrepid dotards that have lost the use of it, will yet beg the continuance of it, and make themselves younger than they are, as if they could cozen even fate itself. When they fall sick, what promises of amendment if they escape that bout! What exclamations against the folly of their mis-spent time! And yet, if they recover, they relapse. No man takes care to live well, but long; when yet it is in every body's power to do the former, and in no man's to do the latter. We consume our lives, in providing the very instruments of life, and govern ourselves still with a regard to the future: So that we do not

properly live, but we are about to live. How great a shame is it, to be laying new foundations of life at our last gasp; and for an old man (that can only prove his age by his beard) with one foot in the grave, to go to school again! While we are young, we may learn: Our minds are tractable, and our bodies fit for labour, and study; but when age comes on, we are seized with languor and sloth, afflicted with diseases, and at last we leave the world as ignorant as we came into it: Only we die worse than we were *born*; which is none of nature's fault, but our's; for our fears, suspicions, perfidy, &c. are from ourselves. I wish with all my soul, that I had thought of my end sooner, but I must make the more haste now, and spur on, like those that set out late upon a journey; it will be better to learn late than not at all, though it be only to instruct me how I may leave the stage honourably.

In the division of life there is * time
 * *Time present, present, past, and to come.* What we do
past, and to come. is *short*; what we *shall do* is *doubtful*;
 but what we *have done*, is *certain*, and out of the power of fortune. The passage of time is wonderfully quick, and a man must look backward to see it: And in that retrospect, he has all past ages at a view. But the present gives us the slip unperceived. It is but a moment that we live, and yet we are dividing it into *childhood, youth, man's estate, and old age*, all which degrees we bring into that narrow compass. If we do not watch, we lose our opportunities; if we do not make haste, we are left behind; our best hours escape us, the worst are come. The purest part of our life runs first, and leaves only the dregs at the bottom; and *that time, which is good for nothing else, we dedicate to virtue*; and only propound to begin to live at an age that very few people arrive at. What greater folly can there be in the world, than this loss of time, the future being so uncertain, and the damages so irreparable? If death be necessary, why should any man fear it? And if the time of it be uncertain, why should not we always expect it? we should therefore first prepare ourselves by a virtuous life, a-

gainst the dread of an inevitable death: And it is not for us to put off being good, till such or such a business is over; for one business draws on another, and we do as good as sow it; one grain produces more. It is not enough to philosophize when we have nothing else to do; but we must attend wisdom, even to the neglect of all things else; for we are so far from having time to spare, that the age of the world would be yet too narrow for our business; nor is it sufficient not to omit it, but we must not so much as intermit it.

WE can *properly call nothing our own, but our time, and yet every body fools us out of it, that has a mind to it. If a man borrows a paltry sum of money, there must be bonds and securities, and every common civility is charged upon account; but he that has my time, thinks he owes me nothing for it, though it be a debt that gratitude itself can never repay. I cannot call any man poor that has enough still left, be it never so little: It is good advice yet to those that have the world before them, to play the good husband betimes, for it is too late to spare at the bottom, when all is drawn out to the lees. He that takes away a day from me, takes away what he can never restore me. But our time is either *forced away* from us, or *stolen* from us, or *lost*: Of which, the last is the foulest miscarriage. It is in life, as in a journey: a book, or a companion, brings us to our lodging before we thought we were half way. Upon the whole matter we consume ourselves one upon another, without any regard at all to our own particular. I do not speak of such as live in notorious scandal, but even those men themselves, whom the world pronounces happy, are smothered in their felicities; servants to their professions and clients, and drowned in their lusts. We are apt to complain of the haughtiness of great men, when yet there is hardly any of them so proud, but that at some time or other a man may yet have access to him, and perhaps a good word, or look into the bargain. Why do we not rather complain of

* *Nothing can be called our own but our time.*

ourselves, for being of all others, even to ourselves, the most deaf, and inaccessible?

* *Company and business are great devourers of time.*

COMPANY and business are great * devourers of time, and our vices destroy our lives, as well as our fortunes. The present is but a moment, and perpetually passing away; the time past we call to mind when we please, and it will abide the examination and inspection. But the busy man has not leisure to look back; or if he has, it is an unpleasant thing to reflect upon a life to be repented of: Whereas the conscience of a good life puts a man into a secure and perpetual possession of a felicity never to be disturbed, or taken away: But he that has led a wicked life, is afraid of his own memory, and the review of himself, he finds only appetite, avarice, or ambition, instead of virtue. But still he that is not at leisure many times to live, must, when his fate comes, whether he will or no, be at leisure to die. Alas! what is time to eternity? The age of a man, to the age of the world? And how much of this little do we spend in fears, anxieties, tears, childhood? Nay, we sleep away the one half. How great a part of it runs away in luxury, and excess: The ranging of our guests, our servants, and our dishes? As if we were to eat, and drink, not for satiety but ambition. The nights may well seem short that are so dear bought, and bestowed upon wine, and women: The day is lost in expectation of the night, and the night in apprehension of the morning. There is a terror in our very pleasures; and this vexatious thought in the very height of them, that *they will not last for ever*: Which is a canker in the delights, even in the greatest, and the most fortunate of men.

C H A P. XX.

That Man is happy who may chuse his own Business.

OH the happiness of leisure and privacy! The wish of the powerful and mighty, but what inferiors only enjoy: Inferiors are the people who live to themselves. The very hope and recollection of it is a comfort in the midst of all the dangers and tumults which attend the great. Augustus prayed that he might live to retire from public business: His discourses were always to this effect, and the highest happiness this great prince had in view, was to divest himself of that illustrious state, which however glorious it might appear, was at the bottom only care and anxiety. But it is a different thing to retire for pleasure, and to retire for virtue, which must be active even in that retreat, and give proof of what it has learned. A wise and good man consults the good of posterity, even in private. Zeno and Crispinus did things of greater consequence in their studies, than if they had led armies, held offices, or given laws; which they in reality did to all mankind: Their composure contributed more to the common benefit, than the labour and sweat of other people. That retreat is of no value, which does not afford a man nobler work than business. There is no disagreeable attendance upon great officers; no canvassing for places, no making of parties; no dis-appointments in my pretension to this charge, to that regiment, or to such a title: I do not envy any man's fortune or favour, but enjoy all the bounties of providence with a good conscience, in peace and tranquillity. A wise man is never so busy as in the solitary contemplation of God, and the works of Nature. He withdraws himself to study the good of future ages: and what salutary counsels he finds beneficial to himself, he commits to writing, for the good of future times. He who is well employed in his study (though his

work makes no shew) does the greatest affairs of all others, both divine and human. To give my voice for a public office, or supply a friend with money, are only particular obligations; but he who lays down rules for the governing of our lives, and moderating our passions, obliges human nature in all succeeding generations as well as the present one.

† *Philosophy is a quiet study.*

LET him who would be quiet repair to his † philosophy, a study approved of by all ranks of men. The eloquence of the bar, or whatever addresses to the people has always enemies: but philosophy is attentive to its own business, and even the worst people have an esteem for it. The world can never be so wicked as to conspire against virtue; the name of a philosopher will always remain sacred. And yet philosophy must be handled with calmness and modesty. But then what shall we say of Cato, who interfered in the broil of a civil war, and interposed in a quarrel betwixt two enraged princes? he who when Rome was split into *two factions*, betwixt Pompey and Cæsar, declared himself against *both*. I speak of the last part of Cato's time, for in the former the commonwealth was made unfit for a wise man's administration. Then he could only bawl and beat the air, while he was tossed about by the rabble, spit upon, and dragged out of the Forum, and then again turned out of the senate-house to prison. If a wise man retire, it does not signify whether he does it because the commonwealth was wanting to him, or he to it. But what republic must a man betake himself to? Not to Athens, where Socrates was condemned, and from whence Aristotle fled for fear of the same fate; there also virtue was oppressed by envy. Nor to Carthage, where nothing but tyranny, cruelty, and injustice reigned. There is hardly any government which will either endure a wise man, or which a wise man will endure: So it is necessary to be private, because there is nothing better to be had. A man may commend navigation, and yet bid us be cautious of those dangerous and troublesome seas: and he who commends sailing only upon these terms, may as

well desire me not to weigh anchor. He is the most wretched of slaves who is a slave to business.

How shall I get myself at liberty? We † *At any rate*
† run any hazards for money; take any *purchase liberty*.
trouble for honour; and why will we not
run some hazards for liberty and leisure, without which we
must live and die in a tumult? For while we are in public,
business breaks in upon us, as one blow drives on another;
and there is no avoiding it either with modesty or quiet. It is
a sort of whirlpool, which sucks a man in, and he cannot
disengage himself from it. In short, a man of business cannot
be said to live, and not one of a hundred knows how to
do it; for how to live and die is a lesson which would employ
us all our lives: All other arts have their masters. A
busy life is a miserable one, to be continually employed in
other people's business; to eat, drink, and sleep at their hours,
in short, do all they please, is the worst of servitudes. Tho'
we must quit business, let us do it seasonably; the longer we
put it off, our liberty is in the greater danger: nor must we
be in too great a hurry, nor value business for the sake of
business; nor is it natural to do so, but only for the sake of
the profit that attends it: We love the reward of misery, tho'
we hate the misery itself. Many people seek business without
desiring it, and are tired of their lives without it; for want of
entertainment in their own thoughts when they are alone, the
hours are long and tedious, and in their debauches they appear
as much the reverse. When they give up other people's
business, they do their own; they pretend business of their
own, and value themselves upon being looked upon as men
of employment. They are constantly wishing for liberty, and
never enjoy it; for it can neither be bought nor sold; but a
man has it in his own gift. He that has given a public proof
of his virtue, should try it also in private. It is not solitude,
or a country life, which teaches innocence or frugality. Did
any person ever wear rich cloaths with an intention not to be
seen? Or spread the pomp of his luxury, where there was no

body to see it? There would be no temptations to excess, were it not for spectators; the very preventing us from exposing them cures us of desiring them, for vanity and intemperance are fed by ostentation.

† *Several people withdraw for different ends.*

LET him who has been at sea in a storm † retire, and die in the haven. But let his retreat be without ostentation, and wherein he may enjoy himself with a good conscience, without desire, fear, or hatred, or want of any thing: Not from a hatred of mankind, but for satisfaction and repose. He who avoids men or business out of discontent or envy, his retreat is like the life of a mole: nor does he, like a wise man, live to himself, but to his belly, his bed, and his lusts. Some people appear to retire out of a weariness of public affairs, and the trouble of disappointments; yet even in that recess, ambition finds them out. Many people live concealed, not that they may live more secure, but that they may not be observed; it is their conscience, not their estates, which obliges them to keep a porter; for they live in such a manner, that to be seen unexpectedly would be the same as being detected. Crates discovered a young man waiting alone; he desired him *to avoid lewd company*. Some people are busy in idleness, and make peace more troublesome and laborious than war, and also more wicked, when they bestow their time upon those vices and lusts which are not even learned in a military life. We cannot say the people who are taken up with their pleasures are men of leisure. I would prefer a laborious and troublesome life to a slothful one; and I think it very strange that a man who has buried himself alive should fear death; as a private life without books is the burying of a man quick.

† *Some men retire to be spoken of.*

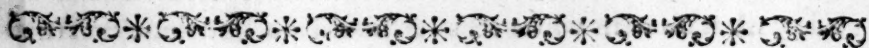
SOME people retire to be the subject of other people's conversation †. This retreat may be called a lazy ambition. They should rather withdraw to talk to themselves. And what shall that be but what we are apt to speak of one another? I will speak ill of myself, examine, excuse,

and punish my infirmities. I have no ambition to have it said I am a great man, who has retired from the world, despising the folly and madness of it. I address myself because I blame only myself. I am not a physician but a patient, therefore if any person come to me for assistance, he is mistaken. I will be very well satisfied to hear it said, when any man has been with me, *I took him for a learned and happy man, but I do not find him so.* I would rather have my retreat excused than envied. A wise man when retired should do like some creatures who confuse the footsteps about their dens, that they may not be discovered. When a door is open, a thief passes by it, thinking it not worth the while; but when bolted and sealed, it tempts people to be prying. When it is said *such a person confines himself to his study, and is seen by no body, &c.* it serves people to talk. Mankind are more ready to take notice of a man who lives retired.

EVERY man is acquainted with his own constitution. One finds a vomit necessary to ease his stomach, another finds good nourishing food most proper for him. A man tortured with the gout abstains from wine and bathing, and every body applies to the weakest part. He who shews a gouty foot, sore head, or contracted nerves, will be allowed to lie still, and attend his cure. The vices of the mind should be treated in the same manner; we must lay aside all impediments, and make way for philosophy, which is inconsistent with common employments. To every thing else we must freely deny ourselves: When we are unwell we confine ourselves, refuse to see company, and give up all cares; and shall we not do as much when we philosophize? Business is only drudgery, proper for slaves; but contemplation is the employment of wise men only. Yet I would allow solitude and company to take their turns; the one induces us to love mankind, the other to love ourselves: When we are weary of company, solitude is a relief; and when tired of being alone, company and conversation relieves us. In short, the man who is at a

Privacy and freedom are required in philosophy.

loss to spend his time is the most miserable of beings; his thoughts are unsettled; the present time does not satisfy him, and he is anxious about the future; whereas he who wisely computes his hours and his business, not only fortifies himself against the common accidents of life, but improves the most severe dispensations of Providence to his satisfaction; and is steady under all trials of human weakness.



CHAP. XXI.

All the Miseries of Life are rendered easy to us by the Contempt of Death.

NOTHING is more difficult than to overcome the natural desire of life, by a philosophical contempt of death; and to convince the world, that there is no hurt in it, and crush an opinion that was brought up with us from our infancy? What help? What encouragement? What shall we say to human frailty, to carry it dauntless through the fury of flames, and upon the points of swords? What rhetoric shall we make use of, to bear down the universal consent of people to so dangerous an error? The captious and refined subtilties of the schools, which speak many sharp things, will be quite ineffectual. The truth of it is, there is but one chain that holds all the world in bondage, and that is the love of life. It is not that I propound the making of death a matter of indifference to us: For what with self-love, and a natural desire in every thing to preserve itself, and a long acquaintance betwixt the soul and body; friends may be sorry to part, and death may carry an appearance of evil, though in reality it is not the least so. Beside that, we are to go to an unknown land, of which we are quite ignorant: So that people die in terror, because they know not whither they are going, and they are apt to fancy the worst of what they do not understand:

These thoughts are indeed sufficient to startle a man of great resolution, without a celestial support. And moreover, our natural scruples, and infirmities, are assisted by the wits and fancies of all ages, in their infamous, and horrid description of another world: nay, taking it for granted, that there will be no reward and punishment, they are yet more afraid of an annihilation, than of hell itself.

BUT, what are we afraid of? *Oh! it is a terrible thing to die*; well! and is it not better once to suffer it, † than always to fear it? The earth itself suffers both *with me, and before me*. How many islands are swallowed up in the sea? How many towns do we sail over? nay, how many nations are wholly lost, either by inundations or earthquakes? And shall I be afraid of my little body? Why should I, that am sure to die, and that all things are mortal, be fearful of coming to my last gasp myself? It is the fear of death that makes us base, and troubles and destroys the life that we would preserve: That aggravates all circumstances, and makes them formidable. We depend but upon a flying moment. Die we must; but when? What is that to us? It is the law of nature; the tribute of mortals, and the remedy of all evils. It is only the disguise that affrights us; as children that are terrified with a vizer. Take away the instruments of death, the fire, the axe, the guards, the executioner, the whips, and the racks: Take away the pomp, I say, and the circumstances that accompany it, and death is no more than what my slave yesterday contemned: The pain is nothing to a fit of the stone; if it be tolerable, it is not great; and if intolerable, it cannot last long. There is nothing that nature has made necessary, which is more easy than death: We are longer a coming into the world than going out of it; and there is not any minute of our lives, wherein we may not reasonably expect it. Nay, it is but a moment's work, the parting of the soul and body. How foolish is it therefore to be afraid of any thing so long, that is over so soon!

† *The fear of death is easily overcome.*

NOR is it any great matter to † overcome this fear: For we have examples as well of the *meanest* of men, as of the *greatest* that have done it. There was a fellow to be exposed upon the theatre, who in disdain thrust a stick down his own throat, and choaked himself: And another on the same occasion, pretending to nod upon the chariot, as if he were asleep, cast his head betwixt the spokes of the wheel, and kept his feat till his neck was broken. Caligula, upon a dispute with Canius Junius; *Do not flatter yourself*, says he, *for I have given orders to put you to death. I thank your most gracious majesty for it*, says Canius, giving to understand perhaps, that under his government, death was a mercy: For he knew that Caligula seldom failed of being as good as his word in that case. He was at play when the officer carried him away to his execution, and beckoning to the centurion, *Pray*, says he, *will you bear me witness, when I am dead and gone, that I had the better of the game?* He was a man exceedingly beloved and lamented: And for a farewell, after he had preached moderation to his friends: *You*, says he, *are here disputing about the immortality of the soul, and I am going to learn the truth of it; if I discover any thing upon that point, you shall hear of it.* Nay, the most timorous creatures, when they see there is no escaping, they oppose themselves to all dangers; the despair gives them courage, and the necessity overcomes the fear. Socrates was thirty days in prison after his sentence, and had time enough to have starved himself, and so have prevented the poison; but he gave the world the blessing of his life as long as he could, and took that fatal draught in the meditation and contempt of death. Marcellinus, in a deliberation upon death, called several of his friends about him: One was fearful, and advised what he himself would have done in the case: Another gave the counsel which he thought Marcellinus would like best: But a friend of his, that was a Stoick, and a stout man, reasoned the matter to him after this manner; Marcellinus, do not trouble yourself, as if

it were such a mighty business that you have now in hand; it is nothing to live; all your servants do it, nay your very beasts too; but to die honestly and resolutely, that is a great point. Consider with yourself, there is nothing pleasant in life, but what you have tasted already, and that which is to come is but the same over again: And how many men are there in the world, that rather chuse to die, than suffer the nauseous tediousness of the repetition? Upon which discourse he fasted himself to death. It was the custom of Pacuvius to solemnize in a kind of pageantry, every day his own funerals. When he had swilled and gormandized to luxurious and beastly excess, he was carried away from supper to bed, with this song and acclamation, *He has lived, He has lived.* That which he did in lewdness, would become us to do in sobriety, and prudence. If it shall please God to add another day to our lives, let us thankfully receive it, but however, it is our happiest, and securest course, so to compose ourselves to-night, that we may have no anxious dependance upon to-morrow. *He who can say, I have lived this day, makes the next clear gain.*

DEATH is the worst that either the severity of the laws or the cruelty of tyrants can impose upon us; and it is the utmost extent of the dominion of fortune. He that

He is afraid of nothing who despises death.

is fortified against that, must consequently be superior to all other difficulties that are put in the way to it. Nay, and on some occasions, it requires more courage to live than to die. He that is not prepared for death, shall be perpetually troubled, as well with vain apprehensions, as with real dangers. It is not death itself that is dreadful, but the fear of it that goes before it. When the mind is under a consternation, there is no state of life that can please us; for we do not so much endeavour to avoid mischiefs, as to run away from them; and the greatest slaughter is upon a flying enemy. Had not a man better breathe out his last once for all, than lie agonizing in pains, consuming by inches, losing of blood by drops? and yet how many are there that are ready to betray their country, and

their friends, and to prostitute their very wives, and daughters, to preserve a miserable carcase! Madmen and children have no apprehension of death, and it were a shame that our reason should not do as much toward our security, as their folly. But, the great matter is to die considerately, and cheerfully, upon the foundation of virtue; for life, in itself, is irksome; and only eating, and drinking, in a circle.

† *It is appointed
for all men once
to die.*

THERE are numbers of people, who betwixt the † apprehensions of death, and the miseries of life, are at their wits end what to do with themselves: Wherefore let us fortify ourselves against those calamities, from which the prince is no more exempt than the beggar. Pompey the Great had his head taken off by a boy and an eunuch, (young Ptolemy, and Photinus.) Caligula commanded the tribune Decimus to kill Læpidus; and another tribune (Chæreus) did as much for Caligula. Never was any man so great, but he was as liable to suffer mischief, as he was able to do it. Has not a thief, or an enemy, your throat at his mercy? Nay, and the meanest of servants has the power of life and death over his master; for, whosoever contemns his own life, may be master of another body's. You will find in story, that the displeasure of servants has been as fatal as that of tyrants: And what matters it, the power of him we fear, when the thing we fear is in every body's power? Suppose I fall into the hands of an enemy, and the conqueror condemns me to be led in triumph: It is but carrying me thither whither I should have gone without him; that is to say, toward death, whither I have been marching ever since I was born. It is the fear of our last hour that disquiets all the rest. By the justice of all constitutions, mankind is condemned to a capital punishment: Now how despicable would that man appear, who being sentenced to death in common with the whole world, should only petition, that he might be the last man brought to the block? Some men are particularly afraid of thunder, and yet extremely careless of other, and of greater dangers: as if that were all they have

to fear. Will not a sword, a stone, a fever, do the work as well? Suppose the bolt should hit us, it were yet braver to die with a stroke, than with a bare apprehension of it: Beside the vanity of imagining that heaven and earth should be put into such a disorder only for the death of one man. A good, and a brave man is not moved with lightning, tempest, or earthquakes: But perhaps he would voluntarily plunge himself into that gulf, where otherwise he should only fall: The cutting of a corn, or the swallowing of a fly, is enough to dispatch a man; and it is no matter how great that is, that brings me to my death, so long as death itself is but little. Life is a small matter; but it is a matter of importance to condemn it. Nature that begat us, expells us, and a better, and a safer place is provided for us. And what is death, but a ceasing to be what we were before? We are kindled, and put out: To cease to be, and not to begin to be is the same thing. We die daily; and while we are growing, our life decreases: Every moment that passes, takes away part of it: All that is past is lost: Nay, we divide with death the very instant that we live. As the last sand in the glass does not measure the hour, but finishes it; so the last moment that we live does not make up death, but concludes. There are some that pray more earnestly for death, than we do for life; but it is better to receive it cheerfully when it comes, than to hasten it before the time.

BUT, *what is it that we live any longer* For *what reason* for? Not for our pleasures; for those we *ought we to covet* have tasted over and over, even to satiety: *life so much.* So that there is no point of luxury that is new to us; *But a man would be loth to leave his country, and his friends behind him.* That is to say, he would have them go first; for that is the least part of his care. *Well! but I would fain live to do more good, and discharge myself in the offices of life:* As if to die were not the duty of every man that lives. We are both to leave our possessions; and no man swims well with his luggage. We are all of us equally fearful of

death, and ignorant of life: But what can be more shameful than to be solicitous upon the brink of security? If death be at any time to be feared, it is always to be feared; but the way never to fear it, is to be often thinking of it. To what end is it to put off, for a little while, that which we cannot avoid? He that dies, does but follow him that is dead. *Why are we then so long afraid of that which is so little a while a doing?* How miserable are those people that spend their lives in the dismal apprehensions of death! For they are beset on all hands, and every minute in dread of a surprize. We must therefore look about us, as if we were in an enemy's country; and consider our last hour, not as a punishment, but as the law of nature: The fear of it is a continual palpitation of the heart, and he that overcomes that terror, shall never be troubled with any other. Life is a navigation; we are perpetually wallowing, and dashing one against another: Sometimes we suffer shipwreck, but we are always in danger, and in expectation of it. And what is it when it comes, but either the end of a journey, or a passage? It is as great a folly to fear *death*, as to fear *old age*, nay, as to fear *life* itself; for he that would not die, ought not to live, since death is the condition of life. Beside, that it is a madness to fear a thing that is certain; for where there is no doubt, there is no room for fear.

† *We obey nature by dying.*

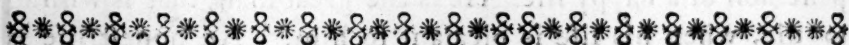
WE are still chiding of † fate; and even those that exact the most rigorous justice betwixt man and man, are yet themselves unjust to Providence. *Why was such a one cut off in the prime of his years?* As if it were the number of years that makes death easy to us, and not the temper of the mind. He that would live a little longer to day, would be as loth to die a hundred years hence. But which is more reasonable, for us to obey nature, or for nature to obey us? Go we must at last, and no matter how soon. It is the work of fate to make us live long, but it is the business of virtue to make a short life sufficient. Life is to be measured by action, not by time: A

man may die old at thirty, and young at fourscore. Nay, the one lives after death, and the other perished before he died. I look upon age among the effects of chance. How long I shall live is in the power of others, but it is in my own, how well. The largest space of time, is to live until a man is wise. He that dies of old age, does no more than go to bed, when he is weary. Death is the test of life, and it is that only which discovers what we are, and distinguishes betwixt ostentation and virtue. A man may dispute, cite great authorities, talk learnedly, buff it out, and yet be rotten at heart. But let us soberly attend our business; and since it is uncertain *when* or *where* we shall die, let us look for death in all places, and at all times: We can never study that point too much, which we can never come to experiment, whether we know it or no. It is a blessed thing to dispatch the business of life before we die; and then to expect death in the possession of a happy life. He is the great man, that is willing to die, when his life is pleasant to him. An honest life is not a greater good than an honest death. How many brave young men, by an instinct of nature, are carried on to great actions, and even to the contempt of all hazards?

It is childish to go out of the * world groaning, and wailing; as we came into it. Our bodies must be thrown away, as the secundine that wraps up the infant, the other being only the covering of the soul. We shall then discover the secrets of nature; the darkness shall be discussed, and our souls irradiated with light, and glory: a glory without a shadow: a glory that shall surround us, and from whence we shall look down, and see day and night beneath us. If we cannot lift up our eyes toward the lamp of heaven without dazzling, what shall we do when we come to behold the divine light in its illustrious original? That death which we so much dread and decline, is not a determination, but the intermission of a life, which will return again. All those things that are the very cause of life, are the way to death:

* *It is acting very childishly to die lamenting.*

We fear it, as we do fame; but it is a great folly to fear words. Some people are so impatient of life, that they are still wishing for death; but he that wishes to die, does not desire it: Let us rather wait God's pleasure, and pray for health, and life. If we want to live, wherefore do we so much desire to die? If we have a mind to die, we may do it without talking of it. Men are far more resolute in the article of death itself, than they are about the circumstances of it. For it makes a man courageous to consider, that his fate is inevitable; the slow approaches of death are the most troublesome to us; as we see many a gladiator, who, upon his wounds, will direct his adversary's weapon to his very heart; though perhaps not very courageous in the combat. Some people are so wretched as not to have the heart either to live or die. In short, the contempt of death is certain liberty, and the fear of it quite the reverse.



CHAP. XXII.

The Necessity and Providence of Death are excellent Consolations against it.

OUR continuance upon earth is no more than a prelude to eternity, where we are to expect another original and another state of things: we have but a very distant prospect of heaven here; let us therefore expect our last and decretory hour with courage. The last, I mean, to our bodies, but not to our minds: we must leave our luggage behind us, and return as naked out of it as we came into it. The day which we fear as our last, is but the birth-day of our eternity; and it is the only way to it: So that what we dread as a rock proves to be but a safe harbour; in many cases to be desired, never to be refused; and he that dies young, has only made a quick voyage of it. Some are be-

calmed; others cut it away before wind; and we live just as we fail: First, we run our childhood out of sight; our youth next; and then our middle age: After that follows old age, and brings us to the common end of mankind. It is a great providence that we have more ways out of the world, than we have into it. Our security stands upon a point, the very article of death. It draws a great many blessings into a very narrow compass: And although the fruit of it does not seem to extend to the defunct, yet the difficulty of it is more than balanced by the contemplation of the future. Nay, suppose that all the business of this world should be forgotten; or my memory traduced, what is all this to me? *I have done my duty.* Undoubtedly that which puts an end to all other evils, cannot be a very great evil itself; and yet it is no easy thing for flesh and blood to despise life. What if death comes? If it does not stay with us, why should we fear it? One hangs himself for a mistress, another leaps the garret window to avoid a cholerick master; a third runs away, and stabs himself, rather than he will be brought back again. We see the force even of our infirmities, and shall we not then do greater things for the love of virtue? To suffer death is but the law of nature; and it is a great comfort that it can be done but once; in the very convulsions of it, we have this consolation, that our pain is near an end, and that it frees us from all the miseries of life. What it is we know not; and it were rash to condemn what we do not understand: But this we presume; either that we shall pass out of this into a better life, where we shall live with tranquillity and splendor in diviner mansions; or else return to our first principles, free from the sense of any inconvenience. There is nothing immortal, nor many things lasting; but by divers ways every thing comes to an end. What an arrogance is it then, when the world itself stands condemned to a dissolution, that man alone should expect to live for ever? It is unjust not to allow unto the giver, the power of disposing of his own bounty; and a folly only to value the present. Death

is as much a debt as money; and life is but a journey towards it. Some dispatch it sooner, others later; but we must all have the same period. The thunder-bolt is undoubtedly just, that draws, even from those that are struck with it, a veneration. A great soul takes no delight in staying with the body, it considers whence it came, and knows whither it is to go. The day will come, that shall separate the mixture of soul and body; of divine and human: My body I will leave where I found it; my soul I will restore to heaven, which would have been there already, but for the clog that keeps it down; And beside, how many men have been the worse for longer living, that might have died with reputation, if they had been sooner taken away? How many disappointments of hopeful youths, that have proved dissolute men? Over and above the ruins, shipwrecks, torments, prisons that attend long life: A blessing so deceitful, that if a child were in a condition to judge of it, and at liberty to refuse it, he would not take it.

‡ WHAT God has made necessary, mankind should comply with cheerfully: As there is a necessity of death, so that necessity is equal, and invincible. No man has cause of complaint for that which every man must suffer as well as himself. When we *should* die, we *will*

not, and when we *would not*, we *must*: But our fate is fixed, and unavoidable is the decree. Why do we then stand trembling when the time comes? Why do we not as well lament that we did not live a thousand years ago, as that we shall not live a thousand years hence? It is but travelling the great road, and to the place whither we must all go at last. It is but submitting to the law of nature, and to that lot which the whole world has suffered that is gone before us; and so must they too that are to come after us. Nay, how many thousands, when our time comes, will expire in the same moment with us? He that will not follow shall be drawn by

force: And is it not much better now to do that willingly which we shall otherwise be made to do in spite of our hearts? The sons of mortal parents must expect a mortal posterity; Death is the end of great and small. We are born helpless, and exposed to the injuries of all creatures, and of all weathers. The very necessities of life are deadly to us. We meet with our fate in our dishes, in our cups, and in the very air we breathe; nay, our very birth is inauspicious, for we come into the world weeping; and in the middle of our designs, while we are meditating great matters, and stretching of our thoughts to after-ages, death cuts us off; and our longest date is only the revolution of a few years. One man dies at the table; another goes away in his sleep; a third in his mistress's arms; a fourth is stabbed; another is stung with an adder, or crushed with the fall of a house. We have several ways to our end, but the end itself, which is death, is still the same. Whether we die by a sword, by a halter, by a potion, or by a disease, it is all but *Death*. A child dies in his infancy, and an old man at a hundred; they are both mortal alike, though the one goes sooner than the other. All that lies betwixt the cradle and the grave, is uncertain. If we compute the *troubles*, the life even of a child is long; if the *sweetness* of the *passage*, that of an old man is short; the whole is slippery and deceitful, and only death certain; and yet all people complain of that which never deceived any man. Senecio raised himself from a small beginning, to a vast fortune, being very well skilled in the faculties both of getting and of keeping, and either of them was sufficient for the doing of his business. He was a man infinitely careful, both of his patrimony, and of his body. He gave me a morning's visit (says our author) and after that visit he went away, and spent the rest of the day with a friend of his that was desperately sick. At night he was merry at supper, and seized immediately after with a squinzy, which dispatched him in a few hours. This man that had money at use in all places, and in the very course and height of his prospe-

rity, was thus cut off. How foolish a thing is it then for a man to flatter himself with long hopes, and to pretend to dispose of the future? Nay, the very present slips through our fingers, and there is not that moment which we can call our own. How vain a thing is it for us to enter upon projects? And to say to ourselves, *Well, I will go build, purchase, discharge such offices, jettie my affairs, and then retire?* We are all of us born to the same casualties; all equally frail and uncertain of to-morrow. At the very altar, where we pray for life, we learn to die, by seeing the sacrifices killed before us. But there is no need of a wound, or searching the heart for it, when the noose of a cord, or the smothering of a pillow will do the work. All things have their seasons; they begin, they increase, and they die. The heavens and the earth grow old, and are appointed their periods. That which we call death, is but a pause or suspension; and in truth a progress to life; only our thoughts look downward upon the body, and not forward upon things to come. All things under the sun are mortal; cities, empires: And the time will come when it shall be a question where they were, and perchance whether ever they had a being or no? Some will be destroyed by war; others by luxury, fire, inundations, earthquakes: Why should it trouble me then to die, as a forerunner of an universal dissolution? A great mind submits itself to God, and suffers willingly what the law of the universe will otherwise bring to pass upon necessity. That good old man Bassus (though with one foot in the grave) how chearful a mind does he bear! He lives in the view of death, and contemplates his own end with less concern of thought or countenance than he would do another man's. It is a hard lesson, and what we do not easily learn, to receive our death without trouble, especially in the case of Bassus. There is a mixture of hope in other deaths; the sea may swallow a man, and throw him up again; a fire may be quenched, a disease cured, a falling house either propped or avoided. A pardon may interpose betwixt the ax and the

body; but in the case of old age there is no place for either hope or intercession. Let us therefore live in our bodies as if we were only to lodge in them this night, and to leave them to-morrow. We must fortify ourselves against the necessity of death, by frequently thinking of it. He who has armed himself against poverty, may perhaps come to live in plenty. A man may strengthen himself against pain, and yet live in a state of health; against the loss of friends, and never lose any: but he that fortifies himself against the fear of death, shall undoubtedly have occasion to employ that virtue. It is the care of a wise and good man to look to his manners and actions, and rather how *well* he lives than how *long*: for it is not the business to die sooner or later, but to die well, or ill: for *death brings us to immortality*.



CHAP. XXIII.

The Folly of being too much afflicted for the Loss of Friends and Relations.

THE death of friends and relations is, next to the encounter of death in our own bodies, what most affects an honest man; and some are of so generous a disposition, that they would rather lose their own lives than have their friends lose theirs; and yet this affliction, which by nature is so grievous to us, is rendered familiar and easy to us by providence and virtue.

It is not only natural † but just to be afflicted at the death of a friend; but not too much so. To make too much noise about our loss is more the effects of vain glory than of real grief. He who is more afflicted when in company than in his closet, shews rather the ambition than the piety of his sorrow. Nay, and in the violence of his pas-

† *It is allowable to be moderately afflicted.*

sion, frequently things happen which make him laugh. Time at last cures all, but it were better done by moderation and wisdom. Some people do as good as set a guard upon themselves, as if they were afraid that their grief would leave them. The ostentation of grief is many times more than the grief itself. When any body is within hearing, what groans, and lamentations! When they are alone, and private, all is hush and quiet: So soon as any body comes in, they are at it again; and down they throw themselves upon the bed; fall to wringing of their hands, and wishing of themselves dead; which they might have executed by themselves; but their sorrow leaves them with the company. We forsake nature, and run over to the practices of the people, that never were the authors of any thing that is good. If destiny were to be wrought upon by tears, I would allow you to spend your days and nights in sadness and mourning; tearing of your hair, and beating of your breast; but if fate be inexorable, and death will keep what he has taken, it is in vain to be afflicted. And yet I would not advise insensibility and hardness; it were inhumanity, and not virtue, not to be moved at the separation of familiar friends, and relations: Now, in such cases, we cannot command ourselves; we cannot forbear weeping, and we ought not to forbear: But, let us not pass the bounds of affection, and run into imitation: within these limits the mind is eased by it.

A WISE man weeps ‡ in some cases, and cannot avoid it in others; when one is struck with the surprize of ill news, as the death of a friend, or the like; or upon the last farewell of an acquaintance under the hand of an executioner, he lies under a natural necessity of weeping, and trembling. In another case we may indulge our sorrow, as upon the memory of a dead friend's conversation, or kindness, one may let fall tears of generosity and joy. We favour the one, and we are overcome by the other; and this is well; but we ought

‡ *Sorrow is in some cases allowable, and inevitable in others.*

by no means to force them: They may flow of their own accord, without derogating from the dignity of a wise man; who at the same time both preserves his gravity, and obeys nature. Nay, there is a certain decorum even in weeping; for excess of sorrow is as absurd as profuse laughter. Why do we not as well weep, when our trees that we took pleasure in are stript of their leaves, as at the loss of other satisfactions? When the next season repairs them, either with the same again, or others in their places. We may *accuse* fate, but we cannot *alter* it, for it is hard and inexorable, and not to be removed, either with reproaches or tears. They may carry *us* to the *dead*, but never bring *them* back again to us. If reason does not put an end to our sorrows, fortune never will: One is pinched with poverty; another solicited with ambition, and fears the very wealth that he coveted. One is troubled for the loss of children; another for the want of them; so that we shall sooner want tears than matter for them; let us therefore spare that for which we have so much occasion. I do confess, that in the very parting of friends there is something of an uneasiness and trouble; but it is rather voluntary than natural; and it is custom more than sense that affects us. We do rather impose a sorrow upon ourselves, than submit to it; as people cry when they have company; and when nobody looks on, all is well again. It is foolish to mourn without measure; and not to mourn at all, is insensibility. The best temper is betwixt piety and reason; to be sensible, but neither transported, nor abashed. He that can put a stop to his tears and pleasures when he will, is safe. It is an equal infelicity to be either too soft or too hard. We are overcome by the one, and we are put to a struggle with the other. There is a certain intemperance in that sorrow that passes the rules of modesty; and yet great piety is in many cases a dispensation to good manners. The loss of a son, or of a friend, cuts a man to the heart, and there is no opposing the first violence of this passion; but when a man comes once to deliver himself wholly up to la-

mentations, he is to understand, that though some tears deserve compassion, yet others are absurd. A grief that is fresh, finds pity, and comfort; but when it is inveterate it is made a jest of, for it is either counterfeit, or foolish. Beside that; to weep excessively for the dead, is an affront to the living. The most justifiable cause of mourning is to see good men come to unhappy ends, and virtue oppressed by the iniquity of fortune. But in this case too they either suffer resolutely, and yield us delight in their courage, and example; or meanly, and so give us the less trouble for the loss. He that dies cheerfully dries up my tears, and he that dies whiningly does not deserve them. I would bear the death of friends and children, with the same constancy that I would expect my own; and no more lament the one, than fear the other. He that bethinks himself, how often friends have been parted, will find more time lost among the living, than upon the dead; and the most desperate mourners are they that cared least for their friends when they were living; for they think to redeem their credit for want of kindness to the living by extravagant ravings for the dead. Some people will have grief to be only the perverse delight of a restless mind; and sorrows, and pleasures to be near a-kin: and others find joy even in their tears. But which is more barbarous, to be insensible of grief for the death of a friend, or to fish for pleasure in grief, when a son perhaps is burning, or a friend expiring? To forget one's friend, to bury the memory with the body: to lament out of measure, is all inhuman. He that is gone, either would not have his friend tormented, or knows not that he is so: if he does not feel it, it is superfluous: if he does, it is unacceptable to him. If reason cannot prevail, reputation may; for immoderate mourning lessens a man's character: It is a shameful thing for a wise man to make the *weariness* of grieving the *remedy* of it. In time, the most stubborn grief will leave us, if in prudence we do not leave that first.

BUT, am I afflicted for my friend's sake, or * my own? Why should I be sorry for the loss of him that is either happy, or not at all in being? In the one case, it is envy; and in the other, it is madness. We are apt to say, *What would I give to see him again, and to enjoy his conversation! I was never sad in his company; my heart leaped whenever I met him: I want him wherever I go:* all that is to be said is, *the greater the loss, the greater is the virtue to overcome it.* If grieving will do no good, it is an idle thing to grieve; and if that which has befallen one man remains to all, it is as unjust to complain. The whole world is upon the march towards the same point; why do we not cry for ourselves that are to follow, as well as for him that is gone first? Why do we not as well lament before-hand, for that which we know will be, and cannot possibly but be? He is not *gone* but *sent before*. As there are many things that he has lost, so there are many things that he does not fear: as anger, jealousy, envy, &c. Is he not more happy in desiring nothing, than miserable in what he has lost? We do not mourn for the absent, why then for the dead, who are effectually no other? We have lost one blessing, but we have many left; and shall not all these satisfactions support us against our sorrow?

THE comfort of having a friend * may be taken away, but not that of having had one. As there is a sharpness in some fruits, and a bitterness in some wines that pleases us, so there is a mixture in the remembrance of friends, where the loss of the company is sweetened again by the contemplation of their virtues. In some respects I have lost what I had; and in others, I retain still what I have lost. It is an ill construction of providence, to reflect only upon my friend's being taken away, without any regard to the benefit of his being once given me. Let us therefore make the best of our friends, while we have

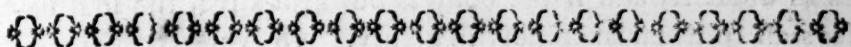
** Our grief is often more for our own sakes, than for our friends.*

** A friend may be taken away, but not the comfort of the friendship.*

them; for how long we shall keep them, is uncertain. I have lost a hopeful son, but, how many fathers have been deceived in their expectations? and how many noble families have been destroyed by luxury, and riot? He that grieves for the loss of a son, what if he had lost a friend? And yet he that has lost a friend, has more cause of joy that he once had him, than of grief that he is taken away. Shall a man bury his friendship with his friend? We are ungrateful for that which is past, in hope of what is to come; as if that which is to come would not quickly be past too. That which is past we are sure of. It is true we may have satisfaction both from what is past and that which is to come; one from memory, and the other from expectation; the one may probably never happen, but you cannot make the other not to have happened.

It is needless to * apply comfort to fresh
** There is no* and bleeding sorrow; mentioning the cause
bearing the of it only increases our grief. It resembles
first transports an unseasonable medicine in sickness; it
of grief. will bear handling better when the first violence is over.

Minds which are weakened by long happiness are excusable for explaining, but it is very different from those who have been all their lives inured to hardships. There is one advantage from a long course of misfortunes, though it perplexes in the time, it hardens us at least: like a young soldier, who shrinks at every wound and trembles when the surgeon makes his appearance; whereas a veteran can with composure see his own body cut and mangled, with as little concern as if it was another person's. We should stand the shock and cure of all misfortunes with the same resolution; our experience has taught us nothing, if we cannot bear up under miseries. It is ridiculous to attempt to cure by entertainments and diversions; we are likely to fall into relapses, so had much rather get the better of our sorrow, than beguile it.



C H A P. XXIV.

Comfort under bodily Pain and Punishment.

TO draw good from evil, and by virtue to improve misfortunes into blessings, is certainly a master piece. You will say, *it is a terrible thing for a man to be debarred from the freedom of his own country.* And do we not every day see hundreds in the street who are so? some for pride, some out of curiosity, or for business, friendship, pleasure, experience, study, vanity, luxury, discontent: some to exercise their virtues, others their vices; and not a small number to prostitute either their bodies or their eloquence? To leave pleasant countries and go to the worst islands, though they be ever so barren or rocky, the climate intemperate, or inhabitants barbarous; he who is banished thither, will find many strangers who live there for their pleasure. It is natural for the mind of man to be changeable and curious; and when one considers their divine original, it is no wonder, as heavenly things are continually in motion: witness the stars, and the orbs, which are continually moving, rolling and changing of place; according to the law and appointment of nature. But you will say, here are no woods, no rivers, no gold, pearl, nor commodity for trade; indeed scarcely provisions sufficient to keep the inhabitants alive. True, here are no palaces nor artificial grotto's, no materials for luxury and excess; but we sleep under the protection of heaven, and a mean cottage for a retreat is more valuable than the most superb temple, when that cottage is consecrated by an honest man, under the guard of his virtue. Shall any man complain of banishment as a hardship, when he has such company? any banishment yields sufficient for our necessities, and no kingdom is

enough for our superfluities. The mind alone gives us riches in a desert, and if the body is but kept alive, the soul enjoys all spiritual happiness in plenty. Of what consequence is it to be banished from one spot of ground to another, to a man whose thoughts are above, and can look backward or forward, and wherever he pleases, and who has the same matter to work upon wherever he is? The body is but a prison, a clog of the mind, subject to punishments, distempers, robberies; but the mind is sacred and spiritual, liable to no violence. It is not that a person in banishment is to want covering, or cloaths; the body is as easily cloathed as fed, and nature has made nothing that is necessary hard. But if we can be contented with nothing less than embroideries and scarlet, it is our own fault that we are poor, and we should not blame fortune for that. If a man should have all he has lost restored to him, it will do nothing; it will not be sufficient to satisfy his desires; he will still want more to supply his necessities. Insatiable appetites are a disease rather than a thirst.

* *Banishment is but a change of place, and all nations have been banished in that sense.*

Is there a nation or people who have not changed * their place of residence? some have been cast by storms, shipwrecks, or want of provisions, upon strange coasts; others by fate of war; some obliged to go abroad on account of pestilence, sedition, earthquakes at home; some travel for trade, some for knowledge of the world; in short, it is plain that all mankind have moved their quarters, and changed both habitations and names, to such a degree that we have quite forgot that they were. All these transportations are but publick banishments: even the founder of the Roman empire was an exile. In short, the whole world has been transplanted, and one alteration succeeds another. What one man desires, turns another man's stomach; and he who prescribes for me to-day, shall to-morrow be cast out himself. However, we have this consolation in our mis-

fortunes, that we have the same providence, and we carry our virtues with us. And this blessing we owe to the Almighty Power, call it what you please; a *God*, an *incorporeal reason*, a *divine spirit*, or *fate*, and the *unalterable course* of *causes* and *effects*: however, it is so ordered, that nothing can be taken from us, but what we can spare, and that which is most valuable and magnificent remains with us. Heaven is over our heads, and wherever we go, is no greater distance from us than it was before; and while we can amuse our thoughts and eyes with those glories, what does it signify what ground we walk upon?

WHEN we are afflicted with sickness or pain, * the body only is affected: it may bind the hands of a cobbler, or the speed of a footman, but still the mind is at liberty to hear, learn, advise, teach, and to do other good offices. It is an example of publick benefit, for a man who is in pain to be patient. Virtue will appear in the bed, as well as in the field; and he who faces the terrors of death with cheerfulness, is as great a man as he who generously risks himself in battle. It is true, a disease debars us of some pleasures, but procures others. Drink is never so agreeable as in a burning fever, nor meat as when we have fasted ourselves hungry. The physician may deny us some sensual satisfaction, but cannot forbid us the pleasure of the mind. Must we call any sick man miserable, because he must give over his intemperance of wine and gluttony, and betake himself to a diet less expensive, and more sober; and abandon his luxury, which is a disorder of the mind as well as body? I am sensible it must be troublesome at first, to abstain from the pleasures we have been accustomed to, and to bear hunger and thirst; but in a short time, we must lose the relish for them, and then it is no trouble to be without what we do not desire. In disorders we have violent pains, but if they be long, they abate, and we have some intervals of ease; if violent and short, they either dispatch us, or consume them.

* Pain does not affect the mind, but only the body.

selves; so that extremity makes them short, or respites make them tolerable. God almighty is so merciful, that our torments are never both sharp and lasting. The most acute pains are those by which the nerves are affected, but there is this consolation, that they soon render us insensible. In case of extreme pain, let us recollect the most eminent instances of courage and patience; let us turn our thoughts from our afflictions to the contemplation of virtue. Though it be the stone, the gout, or even the rack: how many people have born it without a word or a groan; nay, they have smiled at the torments upon the torture, and provoked them to use new experiments of cruelty, which have likewise been despised. I look upon the *asthma* as the most importune of all diseases; it is called the *meditation of death* by physicians, as it is an agony rather than a sickness: the fit does not last above an hour, as no person is long of expiring. In sickness there are three things grievous, the fear of death, bodily pain, and the intermission of our pleasures: the first we impute to nature, not to disease; for we do not die because we are sick, but because we live. Even sickness has preserved many men from dying.



C H A P. XXV.

Poverty is rather a Blessing than a Misfortune to a wise Man.

HE who goes to himself for what he wants, shall never be poor; for that is the most certain way to get riches. Nature will have her due: but what is beyond necessity, is uncertain. It is not her part to gratify the palate, but to satisfy a craving appetite: bread, though ever so coarse, does a man's business when he is hungry, and when thirsty, water

will quench his thirst: if nature is satisfied, no matter whence it comes, whether he drinks out of gold, silver, or in the hollow of his hand. To promise a man riches, and to teach him poverty is deceiving him; but shall I call him who wants nothing, poor, though he may be indebted to his patience rather than to fortune for it? Or will any man say, he whose riches can never be taken away, is poor? Is it better to have enough, or much? He that has much desires more, which shews, that he has not yet enough, but he that has enough, is at rest. Shall a man be esteemed the less rich, for not having that for which he shall be banished; for which his very wife, or son, shall murder him: that which gives him security in war, and quiet in peace; which he possesses without danger, and disposes of without trouble? No man can be poor that has enough; nor rich that covets more than he has. Alexander, after all his conquests, complained that he had no more worlds to subdue; he desired something more, even when he had gotten all: and that which was sufficient for human nature, was not enough for one man. Money never made any man rich; for the more he had, the more he still coveted. The richest man that ever lived is poor in my opinion, and in any man's may be so: but he that keeps himself to the stint of nature, does neither feel poverty, nor fear it; nay, even in poverty itself, there are some things superfluous. Those which the world calls happy, their felicity is a false splendor, that dazzles the eyes of the vulgar; but our rich man is glorious, and happy within. There is no ambition in hunger or thirst: let there be food, and no matter for the table, the dish, and the servants; nor with what meats nature is satisfied. Those are the torments of luxury, that rather stuff the stomach than fill it: it studies rather to cause an appetite, than to allay it. We ought not to say, *this is not handsome; that is common; the other offends my eye*. Nature provides for health, not delicacy. When the trumpet sounds a charge, the poor man knows that he is not aimed at: when they cry out *fire*, his

body is all he has to look after; if he be to take a journey, there is no blocking up of streets, and thronging of passages for a parting compliment: a small matter fills his belly, and satisfies his mind: he lives from hand to mouth, without carking or fearing for to-morrow. The temperate rich man is but his counterfeit; his wit is quicker, and his appetite calmer.

** Poverty is only trouble-some in opinion.*

POVERTY troubles no man,* but he that thinks it does: and he that thinks it does, makes it so: does not a rich man travel more at ease, with less luggage, and fewer servants? Does he not eat, many times, as little, and as coarse in the field, as a poor man? Does he not, for his own pleasure, sometimes, and for variety, feed upon the ground, and use only earthen vessels? Is not he a madman then, that always fears what he often desires, and dreads the thing that he takes delight to imitate? He that would know the worst of poverty, let him but compare the looks of the rich, and of the poor, and he shall find the poor man to have a smoother brow, and to be more merry at heart; or if any trouble befalls him, it passes over like a cloud: whereas the other, either his good humour is counterfeit, or his melancholy deep, and ulcerated, and the worse, because he dares not publickly own his misfortune: but he is forced to play the part of a happy man, even with a cancer in his heart. His happiness is but personated, and if he were but stripped of his ornaments, he would be despicable. In buying of a horse, we take off his clothes and his trappings, and examine his shape and body for fear of being cheated: and shall we put an estimate upon a man for being set off by his fortune, and quality? Nay, if we see any thing of ornament about him, we are to suspect him the more for some infirmity under it. He that is not content in poverty, would not be so neither in plenty; for the fault is not in the thing, but in the mind. If that be sickly, remove him from a kennel to a palace, he is at the same pass; for he carries his disease along with him. What

can be happier than that condition, both of mind, and of fortune, from which we cannot fall? What can be a greater happiness, than in a covetous designing age, for a man to live safe among informers, and thieves? It puts a poor man into the very condition of providence, that gives all, without reserving any thing to itself. How happy is he that owes nothing, but to himself, and only that which he can easily refuse, or easily pay! I do not reckon him poor, that has but a little; but he is so that covets more. It is a fair degree of plenty, to have what is necessary. Whether had a man better find saturity in want, or hunger in plenty? It is not the augmenting of our fortunes, but the abating of our appetites, that makes us rich. Why may not a man as well despise riches in his own coffers, as in another man's? And rather hear that they are his, than feel them to be so? Though it is a greater matter not to be corrupted, even by having them under the same roof. He is the greater man that is honestly poor, in the middle of plenty; but he is the most secure, that is free from the temptation of that plenty; and has the least matter for another to design upon. It is no great business for a poor man to preach the contempt of riches, or for a rich man to extol the benefits of poverty; because we do not know how either the one or the other would behave himself in the contrary condition. The best proof is, the doing of it by choice, and not by necessity; for the practice of poverty in jest, is a preparation toward the bearing of it in earnest. But it is yet a generous disposition so to provide for the worst of fortunes, as what may be easily born: the premeditation makes them not only tolerable, but agreeable to us; for there is that in them, without which nothing can be comfortable, that is to say, security. If there were nothing else in poverty, but the certain knowledge of our friends, it were yet a most desirable blessing, when every man leaves us but those that love us. It is a shame to place the happiness of life in gold and silver, for which, bread and water is sufficient; or, at the worst, hunger puts an end

to hunger. For the honour of *poverty*, it was both the *foundation* and the *cause of the Roman empire*; and no man was ever yet so poor, but he had sufficient to carry him to his journey's end.

* *Moderate fortune is the best.*

I ONLY desire that my poverty* may not make me a burthen to others or myself. Therefore a moderate fortune is best, that with gentleness of mind will preserve us from fear or envy, which is an agreeable situation. It is in every man's power to do mischief. We never consider the blessing of coveting nothing, and the honour of being full in ourselves, without depending upon fortune. A little with frugality is enough; it makes a poor man rich; and without frugality nothing is sufficient. We had better never have an estate, than lose it; he has least to fear who has least to lose: and those who were never favoured by fortune, are better satisfied than those whom fortune has forsaken. A state between poverty and plenty is the most commodious. Diogenes very well understood this, when he put himself into such a situation as he could lose nothing. The state of life which is the most wholesome, is the most convenient; the body should be indulged no farther than for health; and should rather be mortified than not kept in a state of subjection to the mind. To provide against hunger, thirst and cold, and something for a covering to shelter us against other inconveniences, is necessary; but it is of no consequence whether it be of turf or marble. A man may lie as warm and dry under a thatched roof, as under a gilded one. If the mind be great and glorious, all other things are mean in comparison. Future things are very uncertain, and I would rather beg of myself not to wish for any thing, than of fortune to give it.



SEN E C A

O F

A N G E R.

C H A P. I.

Anger described; it is unnatural, and only to be found in Man.

WE must here encounter with the most dangerous intractable and brutal of passions; the most unmannerly and loathsome, as well as ridiculous: to conquer this monster, will do much towards the establishment of human peace. It is common for physicians to begin with a description of the illness before they meddle with the cure; and why may not this answer with regard to the mind as well as the body?

ANGER is supposed by the Stoicks to be, *A desire of punishing another for some injury done.* Against which it is often objected, that we are frequently angry with those who never did us any harm, but they may possibly hurt us. *A description of anger; what it is.* They already hurt us in imagination: and the very intention of it is an injury in thought, before it

breaks out into an act. It is again opposed, that if anger were a *desire of punishing*, mean people would not be angry with great ones, that are out of their reach; for no man can be said to desire any thing which he thinks it is impossible to accomplish. But for answer to this, I say, that *anger* is the *desire* not the *power*, and *faculty of revenge*: neither is any man so low but it is possible for the greatest man to lie at his mercy.

ARISTOTLE looks upon *anger* to be, *A desire of paying sorrow for sorrow*; and of being troublesome to those who have been troublesome to us. It is argued against both, that beasts are angry; though they are not provoked by an injury, nor moved with a desire of any body's grief or punishment. And indeed, though they are the cause of it, they do not seek nor intend it. Nor is *anger*, (however unreasonable in itself) found any where but in reasonable creatures. It is certain, that beasts have an impulse of rage and fierceness; as they are also more affected with some pleasures than men. But we may as well call them ambitious and luxurious, as angry. Yet they are not void of particular images of human affections. They have their likings and dislikings; but neither the passions of reasonable nature, nor their virtues nor vices. Some objects move them to fury, and others quiet them; they have their disappointments and fears, but are void of reflection: and though they are ever so greatly affrighted, or irritated, as soon as the occasion is removed, they fall to their meat, and lie down to rest again. Wisdom and consideration are the goods of the mind, which brutes are quite incapable of; and we are as much unlike them within as without: they have a strange sort of fancy, and also a voice; but it is confused, and not capable of those variations so familiar to us.

ANGER is not only a vice, but a vice quite unnatural, for it divides instead of joining; and, in some measure, frustrates the intention of providence in human society. One man

Anger is unnatural.

was born to help another: anger makes us destroy each other; the one unites, the other separates; the one is beneficial to us, the other hurtful; the one succours even strangers, the other destroys even the most intimate friends; the one ventures all to save another, the other ruins himself to undo another. Nature is bountiful, but anger is hurtful; for it is not fear, but mutual love that binds up mankind.

THERE are some motions that resemble anger, which cannot properly be called so; as the passion of the people against the *Gladiators*, when they hang off, and will not make so quick a dispatch as the spectators would have them: there is something in it of the humour of children, that if they get a fall, will never leave bawling, till the naughty ground is beaten, and then all is well again. They are angry without any reason, or injury; they are deluded by an imitation of strokes and quieted by counterfeit tears. A false, and a childish sorrow, is appeased with a false and as childish a revenge. They take it for a contempt, if the *Gladiators* do not directly cast themselves upon the swords point. They look presently about them from one to another, as who should say; *do but see, my masters, how these rogues abuse us.*

IT would be endless and unnecessary to descend to the particular branches and sorts of anger.

There is a vindictive, a quarrelsome, a stubborn, a violent, a froward, a fullen, and morose kind of anger: and then we have also

Several kinds of anger.

this variation in complication; one goes no farther than words; another directly proceeds to blows, without saying a word; another breaks out into reproachful language, and cursing; and some satisfy themselves with complaining and chiding. There is an implacable and a conciliable anger; but all anger in whatever degree is wicked.



CHAP. II.

The Rise of Anger.

THE question will be here, whether *anger* takes its rise from impulse or judgment. Whether it is moved of its own accord, or as many other things are, from within us, which arise we know not how? To clear up this point will lead us into greater matters.

IN reality, the *first* motion of *anger* is no more than a sort of threatening preparation towards it; the *second* considers; as who should say, *This injury ought not to pass without a revenge*, and there it stops. Neither *first* nor *second* motion can be avoided, but they may be lessened by use and custom, as even reason cannot overcome it. The *third*, as it rises upon consideration, must also fall there; for that motion which proceeds with judgment, may also be taken with judgment. A man looks upon himself as injured, and chuses to be revenged, but lets it rest for some reason. This cannot properly be called *anger*, but *affection over-ruled by reason*: a sort of disapproved proposal. Reason and affection are only changes of the mind, for the better or worse. Reason considers before it judges, but anger passes sentence without consideration. Reason only attends the present matter; but anger is startled by every accident; it passes the bounds of reason, and carries it away. Anger is an agitation of the mind, which proceeds to the resolution of a revenge, the mind assenting to it. Anger is undoubtedly moved by the species of an injury, but whether that motion be voluntary or involuntary is the point in dispute; though it appears plain to me, that *anger* does nothing unless where the mind goes

along with it. For, first, to take an offence, and then to meditate a revenge, and afterwards to lay both propositions together; and say to myself, *This injury should not have been done, but as the case stands, I must right myself.* This conversation cannot happen except the will join in conjunction. The first motion indeed is single, but all the rest is consideration and superstructure: there is something understood and condemned; an indignation imagined, and a revenge propounded. It is impossible for this to happen, without an agreement of the mind to the matter in consideration. The purpose of this question is to know the nature and quality of *anger*. If it be bred in us, it will never yield to reason; for all involuntary motions are unavoidable and invincible; as a kind of horror and shuddering upon the sprinkling of cold water; the hair standing on end at ill news; giddiness at the sight of a precipice; blushing at lewd discourse. In these cases, reason can do no good; but *anger* may undoubtedly be overcome by caution, and good counsel; for it is a *voluntary vice*, and not of the condition of those accidents that happen to us as frailties of our humanity: amongst which must be reckoned the first motions of the mind, after the opinion of an injury received, which is not in the power of human nature to avoid: and this it is that affects us upon the stage, or in a story. Can any man read the death of Pompey, and not be touched with an indignation? The sound of a trumpet rouses the spirits and provokes courage. It makes a man sad to see the shipwreck even of his enemy; and we are much surprized by fear in other cases: all these motions are not so much affections, as preludes to them. The clashing of arms, or the beating of a drum, excites a war-horse. Nay, a song from Xenophontes would make Alexander take his sword in his hand. In all these cases, the mind rather suffers than acts; and therefore it is not an affection, *to be moved*, but to *give way* to that motion.

THE greatest hero may look pale when he puts on his armour, he may tremble, and his heart beat, before he joins

the battle; but these are only *motions*; whereas *anger* is an *excursion*, and proposes revenge or punishment, which cannot be without the mind. As fear flies, so anger assaults, and we cannot determine upon either caution or violence, without the concurrence of the will.



CHAP. III.

Anger may be subdued.

IT is very foolish to pretend that we cannot govern our *anger*: for we do some things which we ought not to do; that are harder than those which we ought to do; we may tame the wildest affections by discipline, and we may do almost any thing that the mind is willing to do. No other argument in this case is necessary, than the instances of several people both powerful and impatient, who have got the absolute mastery over themselves in this case.

Pisistratus governed his anger. THRASIPPUS when drunk fell foul upon the cruelties of Pisistratus; and when several about him pressed him to make an example of him, he made this reply, *Why should I be angry with a man that stumbles upon one blindfold?* In effect, we are generally the occasion of our quarrels, either by mistake, or by aggravation. Anger comes sometimes upon us, but we go oftner to it, and instead of rejecting it, we call it.

The mildness of Augustus. AUGUSTUS was a great master of his passion: for Timagines an historian, wrote several bitter things against his person, and his family; which passed among the people plausible enough, as pieces of rash wit generally do. Cæsar advised him several times to forbear, and when

that would not do, forbad him to visit him. After this, A-
finius Pollio gave him entertainment; and he was so well be-
loved in the city, that every man's house was open to him.
Those things that he had written in honour of Augustus, he
recited, and burnt; and publickly professed himself Cæsar's
enemy: Augustus, notwithstanding all this, never fell out
with any man that received him; only once he told Pollio,
that he had taken a *snake* into his bosom: And as Pollio was
about to excuse himself; *No* (says Cæsar, interrupting him)
make your best of him; and, offering to cast him off at that
very moment, if Cæsar pleased: *Do you think* (says Cæsar)
that I will ever contribute to the parting of you, that made
you friends? For Pollio was angry with him before, and on-
ly entertained him now, because Cæsar had turned him off.

THE moderation of Antigonus was re-
markable; some of his soldiers were railing
at him one night, where there was but

*The moderation
of Antigonus.*

a hanging betwixt them: Antigonus overheard them, and
putting it gently aside; *Soldiers*, says he, *stand a little far-
ther off, for fear the king should hear you.* And we are to con-
sider not only violent examples, but moderate, where there
wanted neither cause of displeasure, nor power of revenge:
As in the case of Antigonus, who the same night hearing
his soldiers cursing him for bringing them into a foul way,
he went to them, and, without telling them who he was,
helped them out of it. *Now*, says he, *you may be permitted
to curse him that brought you into the mire, provided you bless
him that extricated you from it.*

THE story of Pedius Pollio, upon his
inviting Augustus to supper, is excellent.
One of his boys happened to break a glass;
and his master, in a rage, ordered him to

*A predominant
fear masters an-
ger.*

be thrown into a pond to feed his lampreys. This action of
his might be esteemed luxury, though in reality, it was cru-
elty. The boy was seized, but brake loose, and threw him-
self at Augustus's feet, only desiring that he might not pe-

rish by that death. Cæsar, in abhorrence of the barbarity, immediately ordered all the rest of the glasses to be broken; the boy to be released; and the pond to be filled up, that there might be no farther occasion for an inhumanity of that nature. This was an authority well employed. Shall the breaking of a glass cost a man his life? Nothing but a predominant fear could ever have mastered his cholerick, and sanguinary disposition. This man deserved to die a thousand deaths, either for eating human flesh at second hand in his lampreys, or for keeping of his fish to be so fed.

IT is reported of Præxaspes (a favourite of Cambyfes, who was very fond of wine) that he took the freedom to tell his prince of his hard drinking, and to lay before him the scandal, and the inconvenience of his excesses; and how that in those distempers, he had not the command of himself. *Now (says Cambyfes) to shew you your mistake, you shall see me drink deeper than ever I did, and yet keep the use of my eyes and of my hands, as well as if I were sober.* Upon this he drank to a higher pitch than ordinary, and ordered Præxaspes's son to go out, and stand on the other side of the threshold, with his left arm over his head; *And (says he) if I have a good aim, have at the heart of him.* He shot, and upon cutting up the young man, they found indeed that the arrow had struck him through the middle of the heart. *What do you think now? (says Cambyfes) Is my hand steady or no? Apollo himself (says Præxaspes) could not have outdone it.* It may be a question now, which was the greater impiety, the murder itself, or the commendation of it; for him to take the heart of his son, as yet quite warm, and panting under the wound, for an occasion of flattery: Why was there not another experiment made upon the father, to try if Cambyfes could not have yet mended his shot? This was a most unmanly violation of hospitality, but the approbation of the fact was still worse than the crime itself. This example of Præxaspes is a sufficient proof that a man may repress his anger; for he returned not one ill word, no not so much as a complaint; but he

paid dear for his good counsel. He had been wiser perhaps, if he had let the king alone in his cups, for he had better have drunk wine than blood. It is a dangerous office to give good advice to intemperate princes.

ANOTHER instance of anger suppressed we have in Harpagus, who was commanded to expose Cyrus upon a mountain, but the child was preserved; which when

An instance of anger suppressed in Harpagus.

Astyages came afterwards to understand, he invited Harpagus to a dish of meat; and when he had satisfied himself, he told him it was a piece of his son, and asked him how he liked the seasoning. *What pleases your majesty*, says Harpagus, *must please me*: And he made no more words on it. It is most certain that we might govern our anger if we would; for the same thing that galls us at home, gives us no offence abroad; and what is the reason of it, but that we are patient in one place, and froward in another?

IT was a strong provocation, that which was given to Philip of Macedon, the father of Alexander: The Athenians sent their ambassadors to him, and they were

The moderation of Philip of Macedon.

received with this compliment, *Tell me, gentlemen*, says Philip, *what is there that I can do to oblige the Athenians?* Demochares, one of the ambassadors, said, that they would be greatly obliged to him, if he would be pleased to hang himself. This impudence greatly enraged the by-standers; but Philip desired them to let him alone, and allow the foul-mouthed fellow to go as he came. *And*, says he, *for you the rest of the ambassadors, pray tell the Athenians, that it is worse to speak such things than to hear, and forgive them.* This surprising patience under contumelies added greatly to Philip's security.



C H A P. IV.

It is a deformed Vice, and a short Madness.

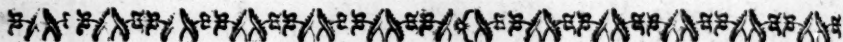
HE who first called *anger a short madness*, was certainly right, as the symptoms of both are much the same: there is such a surprising resemblance betwixt the transports of *choler* and those of *phrensy*, that it is very difficult to distinguish the one from the other. A bold, fierce, and threatening countenance, pale as ashes, and the same minute red as blood; a wrinkled brow, glaring eyes, violent motions, the hands restless, and continually in action; snapping of the joints, stamping with the feet, hair staring, lips trembling, hoarse voice, broken accents, heavy sighs, swelled veins, ghastly looks, trembling knees, and panting bosom; with a thousand other accidents common in both disorders. Neither is *anger* only a bare resemblance of madness, but many times an irrevocable transition into the thing itself. What numbers of people have we known, read, and heard of, that have been bereft of their understanding in a passion, and never came to themselves again? It is therefore to be avoided, not only for moderation sake, but also for health. Now if the outward appearance of anger be so foul, and hideous, how deformed must that miserable mind be, that is harrassed with it? For it leaves no place either for counsel, or friendship, honesty, or good manners: No place either for the exercise of reason, or for the offices of life. If I were to describe it, I would draw a tiger bathed in blood, sharp set, and ready to take a leap at his prey; or dress it up as the poets represent the furies, with whips, snakes, and flames: It should be four, livid, full of scars, and wallowing in gore, raging up and down, destroying, grinning, bellowing, and pursuing: Sick of all other things, and most of all, of itself. It turns

beauty into deformity, and the calmest counsels into fierceness: It disorders our very garments, and fills the mind with horror. How abominable is it in the soul then, when it appears so frightful even through the bones, the skin, and so many impediments? Is not he a mad-man that has lost the government of himself, and is tossed to and fro by his fury, as by a tempest? The executioner of his own revenge both with his heart and his hand; and the murderer of his nearest friends? The smallest matter moves it, and makes us insociable, and inaccessible. It does all things by violence, as well upon itself, as others; and it is, in short, the master of all passions.

THERE is not any creature so † terrible, and dangerous by nature, but it becomes more so by anger. Not that beasts have human affections, but certain impulses they have which come very near them. The boar foams, champs, and whets his tusks; the bull tosses his horns in the air, bounds, and tears up the ground with his feet. The lion roars, and swings himself with his tail; the serpent swells, and there is a ghastly kind of fellness in the aspect of a mad dog. How great a wickedness is it now to indulge a violence that does not only turn a man into a beast, but makes even the most outrageous of beasts themselves to be more horrid and mischievous! A vice that carries along with it neither pleasure nor profit; neither honour nor security; but on the contrary, destroys us to all the comfortable, and glorious purposes of our reasonable being. Some there are that will have the root of it to be magnanimity. And why may we not as well intitle *impudence* to *courage*, whereas the one is proud, the other brave; the one is gracious and gentle, the other rude and furious? At the same rate we may ascribe greatness of mind to avarice, luxury, and ambition, which are all but splendid impotencies, without measure and without foundation. Nothing but what is virtuous can be great, nor truly great, except quiet and composed. Anger,

† *Every creature is made more terrible by anger.*

alas! is only a wild impetuous blast, an empty tumour, the failing of women and children; a clamorous, brawling evil; and we generally find the more noise the less courage; the boldest tongues generally have the faintest hearts.



CHAP. V.

Anger is neither warrantable nor useful.

ANGER is *unjust* and *unwarrantable*. It frequently falls upon the innocent, and discharges itself upon the wrong person: Besides, the mistake of esteeming the most trifling offences as capital crimes, and perhaps punishing an inconsiderate word with fetters and torments, infamy or death. It gives a man neither time nor means for defence, but judges a cause without hearing it, and admits of no mediation. If it be of the adverse party, it flies into the face of truth itself, and turns obstinacy in an error, into an argument of justice. It does every thing with agitation and disorder: Whereas whole families may be destroyed by reason and equity, even to the extinguishing of their names, if there is occasion for it, without indecency of action or countenance.

† *Anger is insociable.*

In the second place, it is † *insociable* to the greatest degree; it destroys all, sparing neither friend nor enemy, and throws human nature into a continual state of war. It dissolves the bond of mutual society, insomuch that our very companions, and relations, dare not come near us; it renders us unfit for the ordinary offices of life, for we can neither govern our tongues, our hands, nor any part of our body. It tramples upon the laws of hospitality, and of nations, leaves every man to be his own carver, and all things publick and-private, sacred and profane, suffer violence.

THIRDLY, It is of no advantage to us. † *It is a sad thing, we cry, to put up these injuries, and we are not able to bear them;* as if any man that can bear *anger*, could not bear an *injury*, which is much more supportable. You will say, that anger does some good yet, for it keeps people in awe, and secures a man from contempt; never considering, that it is more dangerous to be feared than despised. Suppose that an angry man could do as much as he threatens; the more terrible, he is still the more despicable; and on the other side, if he wants power, he is the more odious for his anger; for there is nothing more wretched than a cholerick blockhead, that makes a noise, and nobody cares for it. If anger should be valuable because men are afraid of it, why not an adder, a toad, or a scorpion as well? It makes us lead the life of gladiators; we live, and we fight together. We hate the happy, despise the miserable, envy our superiors, insult our inferiors, and there is nothing in the world which we will not do, either for pleasure, or profit. To be angry at offenders, is to make ourselves the common enemies of mankind, which is both weak and wicked; and we may as well be angry that our thistles do not bring forth apples, or that every pebble in our ground is not an oriental diamond. If we are angry both with young men and old, because they do offend; why not with infants too, because they *will offend*? It is commendable to rejoice for any thing that is well done; but, to be transported for another man's doing ill, is mean and fard. It is beneath the dignity of virtue to be either angry or sad. It is with a tainted mind as with an ulcer, not only the touch, but the very offer at it makes us shrink, and complain; when we come once to be carried off from our poize, we are lost. In the choice of a sword, we take care that it be wieldy, and well mounted; and it concerns us as much to be wary of engaging in the excesses of ungovernable passions. It is not the speed of a horse altogether that pleases us, unless we find that he can stop, and turn, at

pleasure. It is a sign of weakness, and a kind of stumbling, for a man to run, when he intends only to walk; and it behoves us to have the same command of our mind that we have of our bodies. Besides that, the greatest punishment of an injury, is the conscience of having done it; and no man suffers more, than he that is turned over to the pain of repentance. How much better is it to compose injuries, than to revenge them? For it does not only spend time, but the revenge of one injury exposes us to more. In a word, as it is unreasonable to be angry at a crime, it is absurd to be angry without one.

BUT † *And in no case* may not an honest man then be allowed to be angry at the murder of his father, or the ravishing of his sister, or daughter, before his face? No, not at all; I will defend my parents, and I will repay the injuries that are done them; but it is my piety, and not my anger that excites me to it. I will do my duty without fear or confusion; I will not rage, I will not weep; but discharge the office of a good man, without forfeiting the dignity of a man. If my father be assaulted, I will endeavour to rescue him; if he be killed, I will do right to his memory; and all this, not in any transport of rage, but in honour and conscience. Neither is there any need of anger where reason does the same thing. A man may be temperate, and yet vigorous, and raise his mind according to the occasion, more or less, as a stone is thrown according to the discretion, and intent of the caster. How angry have I seen some people for the loss of a monkey, or a spaniel! And were it not a shame to have the same sense for a friend that we have for a puppy; and to cry like children, as much for a bauble, as for the ruin of our country? This is not an effect of reason, but of infirmity. For a man indeed to expose his person for his prince, or for his parents, or his friends, out of a sense of honesty, and a judgment of duty, it is, without dispute, a worthy, and an honourable action; but it must be done then with sobriety, calmness,

and resolution. It is high time to convince the world of the indignity and uselessness of this passion, when it has the authority, and recommendation of no less than Aristotle himself, as an affection very much conducing to all heroic actions, that require heat and vigour. Now, to shew on the other side, that it is not in any case profitable, we shall display the obstinate, and unbridled madness of it: A wickedness, neither sensible of infamy, nor of glory; without either modesty, or fear; and if it passes once from anger into a hardened hatred, it is incurable. It is either stronger than reason, or it is weaker. If stronger, there is no contending with it; if weaker, reason will do the business without it. Some will have it that an angry man is good-natured, and sincere; whereas in reality, he only lays himself open out of heedlessness and want of caution. If it were in itself good, the more of it the better; but in this case, the more, the worse; and a wise man does his duty, without the aid of any thing that is ill. It is objected by some, that those are the most generous creatures, which are the most easily enraged. But first, *reason in man, is impetuous in beasts*. Secondly, without discipline, it runs into audaciousness, and temerity; over and above that the same thing does not help all. If anger helps the lion, it is fear that saves the stag, swiftness the hawk, and flight the pigeon: But man has *God* for his example (who is never angry) and not the *creatures*. And yet it is not amiss sometimes to counterfeit anger; as upon the stage: Nay, upon the bench, and in the pulpit, where the imitation of it is more effectual, than the thing itself. But it is a great error, to take this passion either for a companion, or for an assistant to virtue; that makes a man incapable of those necessary counsels, by which virtue is to govern herself. Those are false and inauspicious powers, and destructive of themselves, which arise only from the accession and fervour of a discase. Reason judges according to right; anger will have every thing seem right whatever it does, and when it has once pitched upon a mistake, it is never to be

convinced; but prefers a pertinacy even in the greatest evil, before the most necessary repentance.

† *It is more mischievous in peace.*

SOME people think, that anger † inflames and animates the soldier; that it is a spur to bold and arduous undertakings, and that it were better to moderate, than wholly to suppress it, for fear of dissolving the spirit and force of the mind. To this I answer, That virtue does not need the help of vice, but where there is any ardour of mind necessary, we may rouse ourselves, and be more or less brisk and vigorous, as there is occasion: But all without anger still. It is a mistake to say, that we may make use of anger as a common soldier, but not as a commander; for if it hears reason, and follows orders, it is not properly anger; and if it does not, it is contumacious, and mutinous. By this argument a man must be angry to be brave; covetous to be industrious; timorous to be safe, which makes our reason confederate with our affections. And it is all one whether passion be inconsiderate without reason, or reason ineffectual without passion; since the one cannot be without the other. Is it true, the less passion, the less is the mischief; for a little passion is the smaller evil. Nay, so far is it from being of use or advantage in the field, that it is the place of all others where it is the most dangerous; for the actions of war are to be managed with order and caution, not precipitation and fancy: Whereas anger is heedless, and heady, and the virtue only of *barbarous nations*; which, tho' their bodies were much stronger, and more hardened, were still worsted by the moderation and discipline of the Romans. There is not in the world, a bolder, or a more indefatigable nation than the Germans; not a braver upon a charge, not a hardier against colds and heats; their only delight and exercise is in arms, to the utter neglect of every other thing; and yet upon the encounter, they are broken and destroyed through their own undisciplined temerity, even by the most effeminate of men. The huntsman is not angry with the wild boar, when he either pursues or receives him; a good

sword-man watches his opportunity, and keeps himself upon his guard, whereas passion exposes a man: Really it is one of the most material lessons of a fencing-school, to learn not to be angry. Had Fabius been *passionate*, Rome would have been *lost*: and before he conquered Hannibal, he overcame *himself*. Had Scipio been *angry*, he would not have left Hannibal, and his army (who were the proper objects of his displeasure) to carry the war into Africk, and to gain his end in a more temperate manner. Nay, he was so slow, that it was charged upon him for want of mettle and resolution. And what did the other Scipio? (I mean Africanus) How much time did he spend before Numantia, to the general grief both of his country and himself? Though he at last reduced it by so wretched a famine, that the inhabitants laid violent hands upon themselves, and left neither man, woman, nor child to survive the ruin of it: If anger makes a man fight better, wine, phrensy, and even fear does the same; for the greatest coward does wonders in despair. No man in his anger is courageous, if he is not so naturally. But put the case, that anger, by accident, may have done some good, fevers also have recovered some disorders; but it is a disagreeable remedy which makes us indebted to a disease for a cure. How many men have been preserved by a fall from a precipice, by poison, by storm, by shipwreck? Are we to recommend the practice of these experiments for that reason?

IN case of an exemplary and prostitute dissolution of † manners, when Clodius † *A man that is* shall be preferred, and Cicero rejected; *offended at public* when treason shall sit triumphant on the *wickedness shall* bench, and loyalty be broken upon the *never be easy.* wheel; will not the object move the cho-
 ler of any virtuous man? By no means; virtue will never suffer correcting one vice by another; or that anger, which is the greatest crime of the two, should presume to punish the less. It is natural for virtue to make a man calm

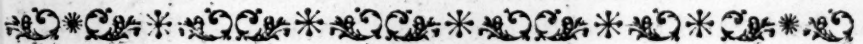
and chearful, and it does not become the dignity of a philosopher to be transported either with anger or grief; and then the end of anger is sorrow, the perpetual effect of disappointment and repentance. But to my purpose. If a man be angry at wickedness, the greater the wickedness is, the greater must his anger be; and he may never be easy, so long as there is wickedness in the world; which makes his quiet dependent upon the humour or manners of others. There passes not a day over our heads, but he that is cholerick shall have some cause or other of displeasure, either from men, accidents or business. He shall never stir out of his house, but he shall meet with criminals of all sorts; prodigal, impudent, covetous, perfidious, contentious; children persecuting their parents; parents cursing their children; the innocent accused, the delinquent acquitted, and the judge practising that in his chamber, which he condemns upon the bench: In fine, wherever there are men, there are faults; and upon these terms, Socrates himself should never bring the same countenance home again that he carried out with him.

IF anger were sufferable in any case, it
 † *Justice is calm and temperate.* might be allowed against an incorrigible criminal under the hand of † justice: But punishment is not matter of anger, but of caution. The law is without passion, and strikes malefactors as we do serpents and venomous creatures, for fear of greater mischief. It is not for the dignity of a judge, when he comes to pronounce the fatal sentence, to express any motions of anger in his looks, words, or gestures: For he condemns the vice, not the man; and looks upon the wickedness without anger, as he does upon the prosperity of wicked men without envy. But though he be not angry, I would have him a little moved in point of humanity; but yet without any offence either to his place or wisdom. Our passions are changeable, but reason is equal; and it were a great folly for that which is stable, faithful, and sound, to repair for succour to that which is uncertain, false, and distempered.

If the offender be incurable, take him out of the world, that if he will not be good, he may cease to be evil; but this must be without anger too. Does any man hate an arm, or a leg, when he cuts it off? or reckon that a passion, which is only a miserable cure? We knock mad dogs on the head, and remove scabbed sheep out of the fold; and this is not anger still, but reason; to separate the sick from the sound. Justice cannot be angry; nor is there any need of an angry magistrate, for the punishment of foolish and wicked men. The power of life and death must not be managed with passion. We give a horse the spur, that is lazy or jaddish, and tries to cast his rider. But this is without anger too, and only to bring him by correction to obedience.

It is true, that correction is necessary, † yet within reason and bounds; for it does not hurt but profits us under an appearance of harm. Ill dispositions in the mind are to be dealt with as those in the body; the physician first tries purging and abstinence; if this will not do, he proceeds to bleeding, nay to dismembring, rather than fail; for there is no operation too severe that ends in health. The publick magistrate begins with perswasion, and his business is, to beget a detestation for vice, and a veneration for virtue: From thence, he advances to admonition and reproach, and then to punishments; but moderate and revokable, unless the wickedness be incurable, and then the punishment must be so too. There is only this difference, the physician, when he cannot save his patient's life, endeavours to make his death easy; but the magistrate aggravates the death of the criminal, with infamy and disgrace; not as delighting in the severity of it (for no good man can be so barbarous) but for example, and to the end that they that will do no good living, may do some dead. The end of all correction, is either the amendment of wicked men, or to prevent the influence of ill example: For men are punished with a respect to the future, not to expiate offences com-

mitted, but for fear of worse to come. Publick offenders must be a terror to others; but all this time the power of life and death must not be managed with passion. The medicine must be suited to the disorder: Infamy cures one; pain another; exile a third; beggary a fourth; but some can only be cured by the gibbet. I would no more be angry with a thief or a traitor, than I would be angry with myself for opening a vein. All punishment is but a moral or civil remedy. I transgress often, and yet I do nothing that is very bad: First try me with a private reproof, then with a public; if that will not do, try banishment; if none of these have the desired effect, put me in chains and imprison me; but should I prove wicked for the sake of wickedness, and give no hopes of being reclaimed, it would be doing me a favour to destroy me. Vice is joined with me, and there is no remedy but taking away both together; but let it be without anger.



CHAP. VI.

Anger in general, with the Effects and Danger of it.

THERE can be no more certain sign of a great mind, than not to suffer anger by any accident to transport us. Clouds and storms are formed *below*, but all *above* is calm and serene. This is the emblem of a brave man, who suppresses all provocations, and lives within himself, composed, modest, and venerable: Whereas anger is an unruly passion, which throws aside all shame at first, without paying any regard to order, measure, or good manners; hurrying a man into unbecoming violences, with his tongue, his hands, and every part of his body. And whoever considers the foulness and brutality of this vice, must confess that there is no such monster in nature as one man raging against another, and endeavouring to sink that, which can never be drowned,

but with himself for company. It makes us incapable either of conversation, or of other common duties. It is of all passions the most powerful; for it obliges a man that is in love to kill his mistress; the ambitious man to trample upon his honours, and the covetous to throw away his fortune. No man living is free from the danger of it; for it makes even the heavy, and the good-tempered to be fierce and outrageous: It invades us like a pestilence, the strong as well as the weak; and it is not either strength of body, or a good diet, that can secure us against it; nay, the most learned men, and otherwise of exemplary sobriety, are infested with it. It is so potent a passion, that Socrates durst not trust himself with it. *Sirrah* (says he to his man) *now would I beat you, if I were not angry with you.* There is no age, or sect of men that is free from it. Other vices take us one by one; but this, like an *epidemical contagion*, sweeps all: Men, women, and children; princes and beggars are carried away with it in shoals, and troops, as one man. It was never seen, that a whole nation was in love with one woman, or unanimously bent upon one vice: But here and there, some particular men are tainted with particular crimes: Whereas in anger, a single word often inflames the whole multitude, and men betake themselves immediately to fire and sword upon it; the rabble take upon them to give laws to their governors; the common soldiers to their officers, to the ruin, not only of private families, but of kingdoms, turning their arms against their own leaders, and chusing their own generals. There is no publick council; no putting of things to the vote; but in a passion, the mutineers divide from the senate, name their head, force the nobility in their own houses, and put them to death with their own hands. The laws of nations are violated, the persons of public ministers affronted, whole cities infected with a general madness, and no respite allowed for the abatement, or discussing of this public tumour. The ships are crowded with tumultuary soldiers. And in this rude, and ill-boding manner they march, and act under the

conduct only of their own passions. Whatever comes next serves them for arms, till at last they pay for their licentious rashness, with the slaughter of the whole party: This is the event of a heady, and inconsiderate war. When men's minds are struck with the opinion of an injury, they fall on immediately wheresoever their passion leads them, without either order, fear, or caution; provoking their own mischief; never at rest, till they come to blows; and pursuing their revenge, even with their bodies upon the points of their enemies' weapons. So that the anger itself, is much more hurtful to us, than the injury that provokes it; for the one is bounded, but where the other will stop no man knows. There are no greater slaves certainly, than those that serve anger, for they improve their misfortunes by an impatience more insupportable than the calamity that causes it.

NOR does it rise gradually, as other
 ‡ *Anger blows up* passions, but flashes like gun-powder, ‡
all in a moment. blowing up all in a moment. Neither
 does it only press to the mark, but over-
 bears every thing in the way to it. Other vices drive us,
 but this hurries us headlong; other passions stand firm them-
 selves, though perhaps we cannot resist them; but this con-
 sumes, and destroys itself: It falls like thunder, or a tempest,
 with an irrevocable violence, that gathers strength in the pas-
 sage, and then evaporates in the conclusion. Other vices are
unreasonable, but this is also *unhealthful*; other distempers
 have their intervals and degrees, but in this we are thrown
 down as from a precipice: There is not any thing so surpris-
 ing to others, or so destructive to itself: So proud, and inso-
 lent if it succeeds; or so extravagant, if it be disappointed.
 No repulse discourages it, and for want of other matter to
 work upon, it falls foul upon itself; and let the ground be
 never so trivial, it is enough for the wildest outrage imagin-
 able. It spares neither age, sex, nor quality. Some people
 would be luxurious perchance, but that they are poor; and o-
 thers lazy, if they were not perpetually kept at work. The

simplicity of a country life keeps many men in ignorance of the frauds and impieties of courts and camps: But, no nation or condition of men is free from the impressions of anger, and it is equally dangerous, as well in war as in peace. We find that elephants will be made familiar; bulls allow children to ride upon their backs, and play with their horns; bears, and lions, by good usage, will be brought to fawn upon their masters; how desperate a madness is it then for men, after the reclaiming of the fiercest of beasts, and the bringing of them to be tractable and domestick, to become yet worse than beasts to each other? Alexander had two friends, Clytus and Lyfimachus; the one he exposed to a lion, the other to himself; and he that was turned loose to the beast escaped. Why do we not rather make the best of a short life, and render ourselves amiable to all while we live, and desirable when we die?

LET us think of our mortality, and not squander away the little * time that we have upon animosities and contentions, as if we were never to be at an end. Had we not better enjoy the pleasure of our own life, than be still contriving how to gall and torment another person's? In all our brawlings and contentions, never so much as dreaming of our weakness. Do we not know that these implacable enmities of ours lie at the mercy of a fever, or any petty accident to disappoint? Our fate is at hand, and the very hour that we have fixed for another man's death, may probably be prevented by our own. What is it that we make all this bustle for, and so needlessly disturb our minds? We are offended with our servants, our masters, our princes, our clients: It is but a little patience, and we shall be all of us equal; so that there is no need either of ambushes, or of combats. Our wrath cannot go beyond death; and death will most certainly come, whether we be peevish or quiet. It is time lost to take pains to do that, which will infallibly be done without us. But suppose that we would only have our

* *Anger is less of time as well as of peace.*

enemy banished, disgraced, or damaged, let his punishment be more or less, it is yet too long, either for him to be inhumanly tormented, or for us ourselves to be most barbarously pleased with it. It holds in anger as in mourning, it must, and will at last fall of itself; let us look to it then in time, for when it is once come to an ill habit, we shall never want matter to feed it; and it is much better to overcome our passions than to be overcome by them. Some way or other, either parents, children, servants, acquaintance, or strangers will be continually vexing us. We are tossed hither and thither, by our affections, like a feather in a storm, and by fresh provocations the madness becomes constant. Miserable creatures! that ever our precious hours should be so badly employed! How prone and eager are we in our hatred, and how backward in our love! Were it not much better now to be making of friendships; pacifying of enemies; doing of good offices both publick and private, than to be still meditating of mischief, and designing how to wound one man in his fame, another in his fortune, a third in his person? The one being so easy, innocent, and safe; and the other so difficult, impious, and hazardous. Nay, take a man in chains, and at the foot of his oppressor; how many are there, who, even in this case have maimed themselves in the heat of their violence upon others?

THIS untractable passion is much more
 § *Anger may be* easily § kept out, than governed when it is
easier kept out once admitted; for the stronger will give
than governed. laws to the weaker; and make reason a slave
 to the appetite. It carries us headlong,
 and in the course of our anger, we have no more command
 of our minds, than we have of our bodies down a precipice;
 when they are once in motion, there is no stop till they come
 to the bottom. Not but that it is possible for a man to be
 warm in winter, and not to sweat in summer, either by the
 benefit of the place, or the hardness of the body; and in like
 manner we may provide against anger. But, certain it is,

that virtue and vice can never agree in the same subject; and one may be as well a sick man and a sound at the same time, as a good man, and an angry. Beside, if we will be quarrelsome, it must be either with our superior, our equal, or inferior. To contend with our superiors, is folly and madness; with our equals, it is doubtful and dangerous; and with our inferiors, it is mean. Nor does any man know but that he that is now our enemy, may afterwards be our friend, over and above the reputation of clemency, and good-nature. And what can be more honourable, or more comfortable, than to exchange a feud for a friendship? The people of Rome never had more faithful allies, than those that were at first the most obstinate enemies: Neither had the Roman empire ever arrived at that height of power, if Providence had not mingled the vanquished with the conquerors. There is an end of the contest, when one side deserts it: So that the paying of anger with benefits puts an end to the controversy. But however, if it be our fortune to transgress, let not our anger descend to the children, friends, or relations, even of our bitterest enemies. The very cruelty of Sylla was heightened by that instance of incapacitating the issue of the proscribed. It is inhuman to intail the hatred we have for the father upon his posterity. A good, and a wise man is not to be an *enemy* of wicked men, but a *reprover* of them; and he is to look upon all the drunkards, the lustful, the ungrateful, covetous, and ambitious that he meets with, no otherwise than as a physician looks upon his patients; for he that will be angry with *any man*, must be displeased with *all*; which were as foolish, as to quarrel with a body for stumbling in the dark; with one that is deaf, for not doing as you bid him; or with a school-boy for loving his play better than his book. Democritus *laughed*, and Heraclitus *wept* at the folly and wickedness of the world, but we never read of an *angry philosopher*.

* THIS is undoubtedly the most hateful of all vices, even compared with

* *Anger the most hateful of all vices.*

the worst of them. Avarice scrapes and gathers together, that which somebody may reap the benefit of: But anger lashes out, and no man comes off *gratis*. An angry master makes one servant kill himself, and another run away from his service; and his choler causes him a much greater loss than he suffered in the occasion of it. It is the cause of mourning to the father, and of divorce to the husband: It makes the magistrate odious, and gives the candidate a repulse. And it is worse than luxury too, which only aims at its proper pleasure; whereas the other is bent upon another person's pain. The malevolent, and the envious, satisfy themselves only with *wishing* another man wretched; but it is the business of anger to *make* him so: And to wreak the mischief itself, not so much desiring the hurt of another, as to inflict it. Among the powerful, it breaks out into open war, and into a private one with the common people, but without force, or arms. It engages us in treacheries, continual troubles, and contentions: It alters the very nature of a man, and punishes itself in the persecution of others. Humanity excites us to love, this to hatred; that to be beneficial to others, this to hurt them; Beside that, though it proceeds from too high an opinion of ourselves, it is yet in effect but a mean and contemptible affection, especially when it meets with a mind that is hard, and impenetrable; and returns the dart upon the head of him that casts it.

To take a further view now of * the
 * *The wretched* miserable consequences, and sanguinary
effects of anger. effects of this terrible distemper; from
 hence come slaughters and poisons, wars
 and desolations, the razing and burning of cities; the un-
 peopling of nations, and the turning of populous countries
 into deserts; public massacres and regicides; princes led in
 triumph; some murdered in their bed-chambers; others stab-
 bed in the senate, or cut off, in the security of their enter-
 tainments and pleasures. Some there are that take anger for
 a princely quality; as Darius, who in his expedition against

the Scythians, being besought by a nobleman that had three sons, that he would condescend to accept of two of them into his service, and leave the third at home for a comfort to his father; *I will do more for you than that*, says Darius, *for you shall have them all three again*: So he ordered them to be killed before his eyes, and left him their dead bodies. But Xerxes dealt a little better with Pythius, who had five sons, and desired only one of them for himself. Xerxes desired him to take his choice, and he named the *eldest*, whom he immediately ordered to be cut in halves; and one half of the body to be laid on each side of the way, when his army was to pass betwixt them: Undoubtedly a most auspicious sacrifice; but he came afterwards to the end that he deserved; for he lived to see that prodigious power scattered, and broken; and instead of military and victorious troops, to be encompassed with carcases. But these, you will say, were only barbarous princes, that knew neither civility, nor letters: And these savage cruelties will perhaps be imputed to their rudeness of manners, and want of discipline. But what will you say then of Alexander the Great, that was trained up under the institution of Aristotle himself; and killed Clytus, his favourite and school-fellow, with *his own hand*, under *his own roof*, and *over the freedom of a cup of wine*? And what was his crime? He was loth to degenerate from a *Macedonian liberty* into a *Persian slavery*: That is to say, he could not *flatter*. Lyfimachus, another of his friends, he exposed to a lion; and this very Lyfimachus, after he had escaped this danger, was never the more merciful, when he came to reign himself; for he cut off the ears and nose of his friend Telephorus; and when he had disfigured him, that he had no longer the face of a man, he threw him into a dungeon, and there kept him to be shewed for a monster, as a strange sight. The place was so low, that he was fain to creep upon all four, and his sides were galled too with the straitness of it. In this wretched state he lay half famished in his own filth; so odious, so terrible, and so frightful a spectacle, that the hor-

ror of his condition had even extinguished all pity for him. *Nothing was ever so unlike a man as the poor wretch that suffered this, saving the tyrant that acted it.*

The cruelty of Sylla. NOR did this merciless hardness only exercise itself among foreigners, but the fierceness of their outrages and punishments, as well as their vices, brake in

upon the Romans. C. Marius, that had his statue set up every where, and was adored as a god; L. Sylla commanded his bones to be broken, his eyes to be put out, his hands to be cut off; and, as if every wound had been a different death, his body to be torn to pieces, and Catiline was the executioner. A cruelty that was only fit for Marius to *suffer*; Sylla to *command*, and Catiline to *act*; but most dishonourable and fatal to the commonwealth, to fall indifferently upon the swords' points both of citizens and of enemies.

It was a severe instance that of Piso* too. A soldier that had leave to go abroad with his comrade, came back to the camp at his time, but without his companion; Piso condemns him to die, as if he had killed him, and appoints a centurion to see the execution. Just as the headsmen was ready to do his office the other soldier appeared; to the great joy of the whole field, and the centurion bade the executioner hold his hand: Hereupon Piso in a fury mounts the *tribunal*, and sentences all three to death: The *one*, because he was *condemned*; the *other*, because it was for his *sake* that his fellow-soldier was *condemned*; the *centurion*, for not obeying the *order* of his *superior*. An ingenious piece of inhumanity, to contrive how to make three criminals, where effectually there were none. There was a Persian king that caused the noses of a whole nation to be cut off, and they were to be thankful that he spared their heads. And this perhaps would have been the fate of the Macrobiani (if Providence had not prevented it) for the freedom they used to Cambyfes's ambassadors in not accepting the slavish terms

that were offered them. This put Cambyfes into ſuch a fury, that he preſently liſted into his ſervice every man that was able to bear arms; and without either proviſions or guides, marched immediately through dry and barren deſerts, and where never any man had paſſed before him, to take his revenge. He run ſhort of proviſions before he got a third part of the way; at firſt his men diſpenſed with boiled leather, the buds of trees, and ſuch things; but in a ſhort time there was not a plant or root to be had, nor a living creature to be ſeen; and then every tenth man was to die by lot, for ſuſtenance to the reſt; this was worſe than the famine: Yet this paſſionate king went ſuch a length, till one part of his army was loſt, and the other devoured, and till he was afraid that he might be ſerved in the ſame manner. At length he ordered a retreat, all this time wanting no delicacies himſelf, while his ſoldiers were taking their chance who ſhould die miſerable, or live worſe. This was an anger taken up againſt a whole nation, that was not known to him, nor deſerved any ill from him.



C H A P. VII.

The common Grounds and Occaſions of Anger.

WE meet with many occaſions of trouble, and diſpleaſure, both great and trifling, in this wandering ſtate of life; every day we meet with ſome cauſe for offence, from men or things: As a man muſt expect to be crouded and jolted in a populous city. One man delays our expectation; another deceives it; and if every thing does not ſucceed to our wiſh, we ſoon fall out either with the perſon or the buſineſs, our fortune, or ourſelves. Some men value themſelves upon their wit, and diſlike thoſe who pretend to leſſen it: Some are inflamed by wine; others diſordered by

sickness, weariness, watchings, love, care, &c. Heat of constitution renders some people liable to it: But people of moist, dry, and cold complexions, are liable to other affections, as suspicion, fear, jealousy, despair, &c. but most of our quarrels are owing to ourselves. Sometimes we suspect in mistake; and sometimes make trifles a matter of consequence. To say the truth, most of those things that exasperate us, are rather subjects of disgust, than of mischief: There is a great difference betwixt opposing a man's satisfaction, and not assisting it; betwixt *taking away*, and *not giving*; but we reckon upon *denying* and *deferring*, as the same thing; and interpret another's being *for himself*, as if he were *against us*. Nay, we do often entertain an ill opinion of well-doing, and a good one of the contrary: And we despise a man for doing that very thing which we should hate him for on the other side, if he did not do it. We take it ill to be opposed when there is a father perhaps, a brother, or a friend in the case against us; when we should rather love a man for it; and only wish that he could be honestly of our party. We approve of the fact, and detest the doer of it. It is a base thing to hate the person whom we cannot but commend; but it is a great deal worse yet, if we hate him for the very thing that deserves commendation. The things that we desire, if they be such as cannot be given to one, without being taken away from another, must needs make those people quarrel that desire the same thing. One man has a design upon my mistress; another upon mine inheritance: And that which should make friends, makes enemies; our being all of a mind. The general occasion of anger, is the sense or opinion of an *injury*; that is the opinion either of an injury simply done, or of an injury done which we have not deserved. Some are naturally given to anger, others are provoked to it by occasion; the anger of women, and children, is commonly sharp, but not lasting; old men are rather querelous, and peevish. Hard labour, diseases, anxiety of thought, and whatsoever hurts the

body, or the mind, disposes a man to be froward, but we must not add fire to fire.

HE that duly considers the subject † matter of all our controversies, and quarrels, will find them low, and mean, not worth the thought of a generous mind; but the greatest noise of all is about *money*. This is it, that makes fathers and children quarrel; husbands and wives; and makes way for sword and poison: this it is that tires our courts of justice, enrages princes, and lays cities in the dust, to seek for gold and silver in the ruins of them. This is it that finds work for the judge, to determine which side is least in the wrong; and whose is the most plausible avarice, the plaintiff, or the defendant's: and what is it that we contend for all this time, but those baubles that make us cry, when we should laugh? To see a rich old cuss, that has nobody to leave his estate to, break his heart for a handful of dirt; and a gouty usurer that has no other use of his fingers left him, but to count it; to see him, I say, in the extremity of his fit, wrangling for the odd money in his interest:—if all that is desirable in nature were gathered into one mass, it were not worth the trouble of a sober mind. It would be endless to run over all those ridiculous passions that are moved about meats, and drinks, and the matter of our luxury; nay, about words, looks, actions, jealousies, mistakes, which are all of them as mean fooleries as those very baubles that children scratch, and cry for. There is nothing great, or serious in all that which we keep such a clutter about; the madness of it is, that we set too great a value upon trifles, one man flies out upon a salute, a letter, a speech, a question, a gesture, a wink, a look. An action moves one man; a word affects another: one man is tender of his family; another of his person; one man sets up for an orator, another for a philosopher: this man will not bear pride, nor that man opposition. He that plays the tyrant at home, is as gentle as a lamb a-

† *The subject of our anger is not worth the while.*

broad. Some take offence if a man ask a favour of them, and others if he does not. Every man has his weak side; let us learn which that is, and take care of it; for the same thing does not work upon all men in the same way. We are moved like beasts, at the idle appearances of things; and the fiercer the creature, the more it is startled. The sight of a red cloath enrages a bull; a shadow provokes the asp; nay, so unreasonable are some men, that they take moderate benefits for injuries; and squabble about it, with their best friends: *they have done this or that for others*, they cry; and *they might have dealt better with us if they had pleased*. Very good! And if it be less than we looked for, it may be yet more than we deserve. Of all unquiet tempers this is the worst, that will never allow any man to be happy, so long as he sees a happier man than himself. I have known some men so weak, as to think themselves contemned, if a horse did but play the jade with *them*, that is yet obedient to *another rider*. A brutal folly, to be offended at a mute animal; for no injury can be done us without the concurrence of reason. A beast may hurt us, as a sword or a stone, and no otherwise. Nay, there are, that will complain of *foul weather*, *a raging sea*, *a biting winter*, as if it were expressly directed to them; and this they charge upon providence, whose operations are all of them so far from being injurious, that they are beneficial to us.

How vain, and idle are many of those †
 † *Trifles make* things that make us stark mad! A resty-
us angry. horse, the overturning of a glass, the falling
 of a key, the dragging of a chair, a jealousy,
 a misconstruction. How shall that man bear the extremities
 of hunger, and thirst, that flies out into a passion for putting
 of a little too much water in his wine? What haste is there
 to lay a servant by the heels, or break a leg, or an arm immediately for it; as if he were not to have the same power over
 him an hour after, that he has at that instant? The answer
 of a servant, a wife, a tennant, puts some people out of all pa-

tience; and yet they can quarrel with the government for not allowing them the same liberty in publick, which they themselves deny their own families. If they say nothing, it is contumacy: if they speak, or laugh, it is insolence. As if a man had his ears given him only for musick; whereas we must bear all sorts of noises, good and bad, both of man and beast. How foolish is it to start at the tinkling of a bell, or the creaking of a door, when for all this delicacy, we must bear thunder! Neither are our eyes less curious and phantastical than our ears. When we are abroad, we can bear well enough with foul ways, nasty streets, noisome ditches; but a spot upon a dish at home, or an unswept hearth, absolutely distracts us. And what is the reason, but that we are patient in the one place, and phantastically peevish in the other? Nothing makes us more intemperate than luxury, that shrinks at every stroke, and starts at every shadow. It is death to some to have another sit above them, as if a body were ever the more or the less honest for the cushion. But they are only weak people that think themselves wounded if they be but touched. One of the Sybarites, that saw a fellow hard at work a digging, desired him to give over, for it made him weary to see him: and it was a common complaint with him, that *he could take no rest, because the rose-leaves lay double under him*. When we are once weakned with our pleasures, every thing grows intolerable. And we are angry as well with those things that cannot hurt us, as with those that do. We tear our cloaths because they are ill made, and our book because it is blotted: things that neither deserve our anger, nor feel it: probably the tailor did his best, or at least had no intention to displease us: if so, in the first place, why should we be angry at all? Secondly, why should we be angry with the thing for the man's sake? and indeed our anger reaches horses, dogs, and other beasts.

Caius Cæsar's behaviour † was blasphemous and extravagant; he challenged Jupi- † *The blasphemous extravagant*

gance of Caius ter for making such a noise with his *thun-*
Cesar. der, as to prevent him from hearing his *mi-*
miques, and therefore invented a machine in imitation of it,
 to oppose *thunder* to *thunder*; a brutal conceit, to suppose,
 that he could reach the Almighty, or that the Almighty
 could not reach him.

‡ *Ridiculous*
extravagance
of Cyrus.

CYRUS ‡ was full as ridiculous, though
 not so impious, in his design upon Babylon:
 there was a river in his way, which prevented
 his march; the current was strong, and car-
 ried one of his horses belonging to his chariot away, upon
 which he swore, that as it had obstructed *his* passage, it should
 never prevent any other person's; and he immediately set
 his whole army to work upon it, and diverted it into an hun-
 dred and eighty channels, and laid it dry. He spent his time,
 and the soldiers their courage, in this ignoble and unprofi-
 table employment, and gave his adversaries an opportunity of
 providing themselves, while he was waging war with a river,
 instead of an enemy.



C H A P. VIII.

Advice in Cases of Contumely and Revenge.

THERE are two sorts of provocations to anger; there is
 an *injury*, and a *contumely*. The former is the heavi-
 er in its own nature: the latter is slight in itself, but trou-
 blefome to a wounded imagination. There are some people
 who will bear strokes, nay even death itself, rather than con-
 tumacious words. A *contumely* is an indignity below the
 consideration of the very law, and unworthy of either a word
 or a complaint. It is only the infirmity and vexation of a
 weak mind, as well as the practice of a haughty and insolent

nature, and signifies no more to a wise and sober man, than an idle dream, that is forgotten as soon as it is past. It is certain, it implies contempt; but of what consequence is it to any man, his being contemptible to others, if he is not so to himself? When a child in arms strikes his mother, tears her hair, scratches her face, it all passes for nothing, because the child has not sense to know what it does. Neither are we moved at the insolence, and bitterness of a *buffoon*; though he fall upon his own master, as well as the guests: but on the contrary, we encourage and entertain the freedom. Are we not mad then to be pleased and displeased with the same thing, and to take that as an *injury* from one man, which passes only for a *raillery* from another? He that is wise, will behave himself toward all men as we do to our children: for they are but children too; though they have grey hairs; they are indeed of a larger size, and their errors are grown up with them; they live without rule, they covet without choice, they are timorous and unsteady; and if at any time they happen to be quiet, it is more out of fear, than reason. It is a wretched condition to stand in awe of every body's tongue; and whosoever is vexed at a reproach, would be proud if he were commended. We should look upon contumelies, slanders, and ill words, only as the clamour of enemies, or arrows shot at a distance, that make a clattering upon our arms, but do no execution. A man makes himself less than his adversary, by supposing that he is contemned. Things are only ill, that are ill taken; and it is not for a man of worth to think himself better or worse for the opinion of others. He that thinks himself injured, let him say, *either I have deserved this, or I have not, it is an injustice: and the doer of it has more reason to be ashamed than the sufferer.* Nature has assigned every man his post, which he is bound in honour to maintain, let him be never so much pressed. Diogenes was disputing of *anger*, and an insolent young fellow, to try if he could put him beside his philosophy, spit in his face: *young man*, says Diogenes, *this does not make me angry*

yet; but I am in some doubt whether I should be so or no. Some are so impatient, that they cannot bear a contumely, even from a woman; whose very beauty, greatness, and ornaments, are, all of them little enough to vindicate her from many indecencies, without great modesty, and discretion. Nay, they will lay it to heart even from the meanest of servants. How wretched is that man whose peace lies at the mercy of the people! A physician is not angry at the intemperance of a mad patient; nor does he take it ill to be railed at by a man in a fever: just so should a wise man treat all mankind, as a physician does his patient: and looking upon them only as sick, and extravagant; let their words and actions, whether good, or bad, go equally for nothing; attending still his duty even in the coarsest offices that may conduce to their recovery. Men that are proud, froward, and powerful, he values their scorn as little as their quality, and looks upon them no otherwise, than as people in the access of a fever. If a beggar *worships* him, or if he takes *no* notice of him, it is the same to him; and with a rich man he makes it the same case. Their honours, and their injuries he accounts much alike; without rejoicing at the one, or grieving at the other.

In these cases, the rule is to forgive all *
 * *Forgive all, where there is either sign of repentance or hope of amendment.* offences, where there is any sign of repentance, or hope of amendment. It does not hold in injuries, as in benefits, the requiting of the one with the other: for it is a shame to overcome in the one, and in the other to be overcome. It is the part of a great mind to despise injuries; and it is one kind of revenge, to neglect a man, as not worth it: for it makes the first aggressor too considerable. Our philosophy methinks might carry us up to the bravery of a generous mastiff, that can hear the barking of a hundred curs, without taking any notice of them. He that receives an injury from his superior, it is not enough for him to bear it with patience, and

without any thought of revenge; but he must receive it with a cheerful countenance, and look as if he did not understand it too; for if he appear too sensible, he shall be sure to have more of it. *It is a devilish humour in great men, that whom they wrong they will hate.* It was well answered of an old courtier, that was asked, how he kept so long in favour? *Why, says he, by receiving injuries, and crying your humble servant for them.* Some men take it for an argument of greatness, to have revenge in their power; but so far is he that is under the dominion of anger, from being great, that he is not so much as free. Not but that anger is a kind of pleasure to some in the act of revenge: But the very word is *inhuman*, though it may pass for *honest*. *Virtue, in short, is impenetrable, and revenge is only the confession of an infirmity.*

IT is a fantastical humour, that the * *The same conceit makes us merry in private, and angry in publick.* jest in private, should make us merry, and yet enrage us in publick; nay, we will not allow the liberty that we take. Some railleries we think pleasant, others biting: A conceit upon a *squint-eye*, a *hunch-back*, or any personal defect, passes for a reproach. And why may we not as well hear it as see it? Nay, if a man imitates our gait, speech, or any natural imperfection, it puts us out of all patience, as if the counterfeit were more grievous than the doing of the thing itself. Some cannot bear to hear of their age, nor others of their poverty; and they make the thing the more taken notice of, the more they desire to conceal it. Some bitter jest (for the purpose) was broken upon you at the table; keep better company then. In the freedom of cups a sober man will scarcely contain himself within bounds. It sticks with us sometimes very much, that the porter will not let us to his great master. Will any but a mad man quarrel with a cur for barking, when he may pacify him with a crust? What have we to do but to keep further off, and laugh at him? Fidus Cornelius (a tall slim fellow) fell downright a crying in the senate-house, at Corbu-

lo's saying, *that he looked like an ostrich*. He was a man that made nothing of a lash upon his life and manners; but it was worse than death to him, a reflexion upon his person. No man was ever ridiculous to others, that laughed at himself first; it prevents mischief, and it is a spiteful disappointment of those who delight in such abuses. Vatinus (a man that was made up of scorn and hatred, scurrilous and impudent to the highest degree, but most abusively witty, and with all this he was diseased, and very much deformed) his way was always to begin to make sport with himself, and so he prevented the mockery of other people. They who are most open to abuse, are generally the most abusive to others; but the humour goes round, and he who laughs at me to-day, may have somebody to laugh at him to-morrow, and revenge my quarrel. But there are some liberties which will never go down with some men,

A PARTICULAR friend of Caligula, Asiaticus Valerius, a man who could not
 * *Some jests will never be forgiven.* * take an affront easily, was told by Caligula what sort of a bed-fellow his wife was. Ye gods! that any man should ever bear and hear this, or a prince speak it, especially to a man of consular authority, a friend and an husband; and in such a manner too, as to confess his disgust and his adultery at once. The tribune Chæreas had a weak voice, resembling an hermaphrodite; when he came to Caligula for the word, he sometimes would give him Venus, and at other times Priapus; as a slur upon him both ways. Afterwards Valerius was the chief instrument in the conspiracy against him; and Chæreas, by way of convincing him of his manhood, cleft him down the chine at one blow with his sword. Caligula was more forward to *break* jests than any man, and nobody bore it more unwillingly.



CHAP. IX.

Cautions against Anger in the Matter of Conversation, and other general Means of preventing it, both in ourselves and others.

ALL we have to say particularly upon this subject, lies under these two heads; first, that we do not fall into a passion; and secondly, that we do not transgress in it. As we take some medicines when we are well, to preserve our bodies, and others to recover us from sickness; so it is one thing not to admit it, and another thing to overcome it. In the first place we must endeavour to avoid all provocations and beginnings of anger: For when our passion has got the better of our reason, it is a hard matter to master it again. A careful education is of great consequence, for our minds are very easily formed in our youth, and it is a hard task to cure bad habits: Besides, we are inflamed by climate, constitution, company, and a hundred different accidents, which we are not aware of.

To chuse a good nurse, and a good-tempered tutor, is of great consequence; for the sweetness of the blood and manners will pass into the child. A soft and effeminate education generally is the occasion of a passionate temper; and it is very seldom seen, that either the mother's or the school-master's darling ever comes to good. But, *my young master*, when he comes into the world, behaves himself like a choleric cockcomb; for flattery, and a great fortune nourish touchiness. But it is a difficult point, so to check the seeds of anger in a child, as not to take off his edge and check his spirits, whereof great care must be taken, betwixt licence and severity, that he be neither too much emboldened nor depressed. Commendation gives him courage and confidence;

but then the danger is, of blowing him up into insolence and wrath: So when to use the bit, and when the spur, is the difficult matter. Never put him to a necessity of begging any thing basely; or, if he does, let him go without it. Ensure him to a familiarity, where he has any emulation: And in all his exercises, let him understand, that it is generous to overcome his competitor, but not to hurt him. Allow him to be pleased when he does well, but not transported; for that will puff him up into too high a conceit of himself. Give him nothing that he cries for, till the dogged fit is over, but then let him have it when he is quiet; to shew him that there is nothing to be got by being peevish. Chide him for whatever he does wrong, and make him soon acquainted with the fortune that he was born to. Let his diet be clean, but sparing; and cloath him like the rest of his fellows: For by placing him upon that equality at first, he will be the less proud afterward: And consequently the less ill natured and quarrellsome.

IN the next place; let us be careful of temptations that we cannot resist, and provocations that we cannot bear; and especially of fullen and exceptionous company: For a cross humour is contagious: Nor is it all, that a man shall be the better for the example of a quiet conversation; but an angry disposition is troublesome, because it has nothing else to work upon. We should therefore chuse a sincere, easy, and temperate companion, that will neither provoke anger, nor return it; nor give a man any occasion of exercising his distempers. Nor is it sufficient to be gentle, submissive, and human, without integrity and plain dealing: For flattery is as offensive on the other side. Some men would take a curse from you better than a compliment. Cælius, a passionate orator, had a friend of singular patience, that supped with him; who had no way to avoid a quarrel, but by saying *Amen* to all that Cælius said. Cælius, taking this ill; *Say something against me*, says he, *that you and I may be two*; and

he was angry with him because he would not; but the dispute fell, as it naturally must, for want of an opponent.

HE that is naturally addicted to anger, let him use a moderate diet, and abstain from wine; for it is but adding fire to fire. Moderate exercises, recreations, and sports, temper and sweeten the mind. Let him be careful also of long and obstinate disputes, for it is easier not to begin them, than to put an end to them. Severe studies are not good for him neither; as *law*, *mathematicks*; too much intention preys upon the spirits, and makes him eager. But *poetry*, *history*, and those more pleasing entertainments may serve him for diversion and relief. He that would be quiet, must not venture at things out of his reach, or beyond his strength; for he shall either stagger under the burden, or discharge it upon the next man he meets; which is the same case in civil and domestick affairs. Business that is ready and practicable goes off with ease; but when it is too heavy for the bearer, they fall both together. Whatsoever we design, we should first take a measure of ourselves, and compare our force with the undertaking; for it vexes a man not to go through with his work: a repulse inflames a generous nature, as it makes one that is *phlegmatick*, *sad*. I have known some that have advised looking in a glass when a man is in the fit, and the very spectacle of his own deformity has cured him. Many that are troublesome in their drink, and know their own infirmity, give their servants order before-hand, to take them away by force, for fear of mischief, and not to obey their masters themselves when they are hot-headed. If the thing were duly considered, we should need no other cure than the bare consideration of it. We are not angry at mad-men, children, and fools, because they do not know what they do: And why should not imprudence have an equal privilege in other cases? If a horse kick, or a dog bite, shall a man kick or bite again? The one, it is true, is wholly void of reason, but it is also an equivalent darkness of mind, that possesses the other. So long as we are among men, let us

cherish humanity; and so live, that no man may be either in fear, or in danger of us. Losses, injuries, reproaches, calumnies, they are but short inconveniencies, and we should bear them with resolution. Beside that, some people are above our anger, others below it. To dispute with our superiors were a folly, and with our inferiors an indignity.

THERE is hardly a more effectual remedy against anger than § patience, and consideration. Let but the first fervour abate, and that mist which darkens the

mind, will be either lessened or dispelled; a day, nay, an hour does much in the most violent cases, and frequently totally suppresses it: Time discovers the truth of things, and turns that into judgment which at first was anger. Plato was about to strike his servant, and while his hand was in the air, he checked himself, but still held it in that menacing posture. A friend of his took notice of it, and asked him what he meant: *I am now*, says Plato, *punishing of an angry man*: So that he had left his servant to chastise himself. Another time his servant having committed a great fault: *Speusippus*, says he, *do you beat that fellow, for I am angry*: So that he forbore striking him for the very reason that would have made another man have done it. *I am angry*, says he, *and shall go beyond proper bounds*. Nor is it fit that a servant should be in his power, that is not his own master. Why should any man venture now to trust an *angry* man with a revenge, when Plato durst not trust himself? Either he must govern that, or that will undo him. Let us do our best to overcome it; but let us however keep it close, without giving it any vent. An angry man, if he gives himself liberty at all times, will go too far. If it comes once to shew itself in the eye, or countenance, it has got the better of us. Nay, we should so oppose it, as to put on the very contrary dispositions: Calm looks, soft and slow speech; an easy and deliberate march, and by little and little we may possibly bring our thoughts into a sober conformity with our actions. When

Socrates was angry, he would take himself in it, and *speak low*, in opposition to the motions of his displeasure. His friends would take notice of it; and it was not to his disadvantage neither, but rather to his credit, that so many should *know* that he was angry, and nobody *feel* it; which could never have been, if he had not given his friends the same liberty of admonition which he himself took. And this course should we take: We should desire our friends not to flatter us in our follies, but to treat us with all liberties of reprehension, even when we are least willing to bear it, against so powerful, and so insinuating an evil; we should call for help, while we have our eyes in our head, and are yet masters of ourselves. Moderation is profitable for subjects, but more so for princes; who have the means of executing all their anger prompts them to. When that power comes once to be exercised to a common mischief, it can never long continue, a common fear joining in one cause all their divided complaints. In a word now, how we may prevent, moderate, or master this impotent passion in others.

It is not sufficient to be found ourselves, unless we § endeavour to make o- § *Various means*
thers so, wherein we must accommodate of diverting an-
the remedy to the temper of the patient. ger.
Some are to be dealt with by artifice, and
address: as for example, *Why will you gratify your enemies, to
shew yourself so much concerned? It is not worth your anger;
it is below you; I am as much troubled at it myself as you can
be; but you had better say nothing, and take your time to be
even with them.* Anger in some people is to be openly op-
posed; in others there must be a little yielding, according to
the disposition of the person. Some are won by intreaties, o-
thers by meer shame and conviction; and some by delay; a
dull way of cure for a violent distemper: But this must be the
last experiment. Other affections may be better dealt with
at leisure: For they proceed gradually; but this commences
and perfects itself in the same moment. It does not, like o-

ther passions, solicit and mislead us, but it runs away with us by force, and hurries us on with an irresistible temerity, as well to our own, as to another's ruin: Not only flying in the face of him that provokes us, but like a torrent, bearing down all before it. There is no encountering the first heat and fury of it; for it is deaf and mad. The best way is (in the beginning) to give it time, and rest, and let it spend itself: While the passion is too hot to handle, we may deceive it: but however, let all instruments of revenge be put out of the way. It is not amiss sometimes to pretend to be angry too; and join with him, not only in the opinion of the injury, but in the seeming contrivance of a revenge. But this must be a person then that has some authority over him. This is a way to get time, by advising upon some greater punishment, to delay the present: If the passion be outrageous, try what shame or fear can do. If weak, it is easily amused by pleasant discourses, or grateful news. It is friendly to deceive in this case; for men must be cozened to be cured.

INJURIES § which we are most affected by, are those which we have either not expected, or deserved. The love of ourselves makes it affect us the more: For in this case every man takes upon him like a prince, to practise all liberties, and to allow none; which proceeds either from ignorance or insolence. What news is it for people to be guilty of evil actions? For an enemy to hurt? Nay, for a friend, or a servant to transgress, and to prove treacherous, impious, ungrateful, covetous? What we do not see in one man, we may in another, and there is as little security in fortune, as in men. Our joys are mixed with fears, and a tempest may rise out of a calm; but a good pilot is always ready for it.

§ *Injuries which we have neither expected nor deserved go nearest us.*



C H A P. X.

Against rash Judgment.

EVERY man should fortify himself on his weak side: If he values peace, he must not be inquisitive, nor listen to tale-bearers; he multiplies troubles to himself, who is over curious to see and hear every thing; for what a man does not know, he does not feel. He who listens to private conversation, and minds what people say of him, will never be at peace. How frequently are things made injurious by misconstruction, which are of themselves very innocent? Wherefore some things we are to pause upon, others to pardon, and others to laugh at. Or if we cannot avoid the sense of indignities, let us however shun the open profession of it; which may be easily done, as appears by many examples of those that have suppressed their anger, under the awe of a greater fear. It is a good caution not to believe any thing till we are quite sure of it; for many probable things prove false, and a short time will make evidence of the undoubted truth. We are prone to believe many things which we are unwilling to hear; and so we conclude, and take up a prejudice before we can judge. Never condemn a friend unheard, or without letting him know his accuser or his crime. It is a common thing to say, *Do not you tell that you had it from me; for if you do, I will deny it, and never tell you any thing again.* By which means, friends are made to quarrel, and the informer slips his neck out of the noose. Admit no stories upon these terms; for it is an unjust thing to believe in private, and to be angry openly. He that delivers himself up to guess and conjecture, runs a great hazard; for there can be no suspicion without some probable grounds; so that without much candour, and simplicity, and making

the best of every thing, there is no living in society with mankind. Some things that offend us we have by report; others we see, or hear. In the first case, let us not be too credulous: Some people frame stories that they may deceive us; others only tell what they hear, and are deceived themselves. Some make it their sport to do ill offices; others do them only to pick a thank: There are some that would part the dearest friends in the world; others love to do mischief and stand at a distance, to see what comes of it. If it be a small matter, I would have witnesses; but if it be a greater, I would have it upon oath, and allow time to the accused, and council too, and hear it over and over again.

§ *Make the best of every thing.*

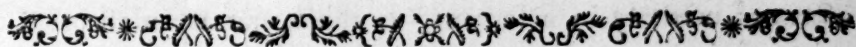
IN those cases where we ourselves are witnesses, we should take into consideration all the circumstances. If a *child*, it was *ignorance*: If a *woman*, a *mistake*: If done by command, a *necessity*: If a man be injured, it is but *to return it*. If a *judge*, he knows what he does: If a *prince*, I must *submit*; either, if *guilty*, to *justice*, or if *innocent*, to *fortune*; If a *brute*, I make myself one by *imitating* it: If a *calamity*, or *disease*, my best relief is *patience*: If Providence, it is both *impious* and *vain* to be *angry* at it: If a *good* man, I will make the *best* of it: If a *bad*, I will never *wonder* at it. Nor is it only by *tales* and *stories*, that we are inflamed, but *suspicious*, *countenances*; nay, a *look*, or a *smile* is enough to blow us up. In these cases let us suspend our displeasure, and plead the cause of the *absent*. *Perhaps he is innocent*; or if not, I *have time to consider of it, and take my revenge at leisure*: But when it is once *executed*, it is not to be *recalled*. A jealous head is apt to take that to himself which was never meant him. Let us therefore trust to nothing but what we see; and chide ourselves where we are over-credulous. By this course, we shall not be so easily imposed upon; nor put to trouble ourselves about things not worth the while; as the loitering of a servant upon an errand, the tumbling of a bed; or the spilling of a glass of drink. It is very absurd to be

disordered at these fooleries; we consider the thing done, and not the doer of it. *It may be he did it unwillingly, or by chance. It was a trick put upon him, or he was forced to it. He did it for reward perhaps, not hatred; nor of his own accord, but he was excited to it.* Nay, some regard must be had to the age of the person, or to fortune; and we must consult humanity, and candour in the case. One does me a great mischief at unawares; another does me a small one by design; or peradventure none at all, but intended me one. The latter was more in fault, but I will be angry with neither. We must distinguish betwixt what a man cannot do, and what he will not. *It is true, he has once offended me; but, how often has he pleased me? He has offended me often, and in other kinds, and why should I not bear it as well now as I have done? Is he my friend? Why then it was against his will. Is he my enemy? It is no more than I looked for.* Let us yield to wise men, and not argue with fools; and say thus to ourselves, *None of us are without our failings; no man is so circumspect, so considerate, or so fearful of offending, but he has much to answer for.* A generous prisoner cannot immediately comply with all the mean and laborious offices of a slave. A footman that is not breathed cannot keep pace with his master's horse. He that is over-watched may be allowed to be drowsy. All these things are to be duly considered, before we give any ear to the first impulse. If it is my duty to love my country, I must be kind also to all my countrymen: If a veneration be due to the whole, so is a piety to all the parts: And it is the common interest to preserve them. We are all members of one body, and it is as natural to help one another, as for the hands to help the feet, or the eyes the hands. Without the love, and care of the parts, the whole can never be preserved; and we must spare one another, because we are born for society, which cannot be maintained without a regard to particulars. Let this be a rule to us never to deny a pardon that does no hurt either to the giver or receiver. That may be well enough in

one, which is ill in *another*; and therefore we are not to condemn any thing that is common to a nation; for custom defends it. But much more pardonable are those things which are common to mankind.

It is a kind of spiteful satisfaction, that
 § *Whoever does an* whoever does me an injury, may receive
injury is liable to one; and that there is a power over him
suffer one. that is above me. A man should stand

as firm against all indignities, as a rock does against the waves. As it is some satisfaction to a man in a low condition, that there is no security in a more prosperous; and as the loss of a son in a corner is born with more patience, upon the sight of a funeral carried out of a palace; so are injuries, and contempts, the more tolerable from a meaner person; when we consider, that the greatest men and fortunes are not exempt. The wisest also of men have their failings, and nobody living is without the same excuse. The difference is, that we do not all of us transgress the same way; but we are obliged in humanity to bear with one another. We should all recollect how neglectful we have been of our duties; how immodest in our conversation, and intemperate in our cups; and why should we not as well reflect how extravagant we have been in our passions? Let us rid ourselves of this evil, and quite root out all those vices which would soon grow again, upon leaving the least sting. Let us think of every thing, expect every thing, that we may not be taken unawares. Fabius said, it was a shame for a commander to excuse himself by saying, *He was not aware of it.*



CHAP. XI.

Take nothing amiss from another Person till you have made it your own Case.

IT is very imprudent to refuse forgiveness to any man, without first considering whether we do not stand in need of it ourselves; as it may some time be our fortune to ask it at the same person's feet. But we are very ready to *do* what we are not ready to *suffer*. It is wrong to charge particular people with public vices: For we are all wicked, and may see in ourselves what we blame in others. It is not leanness in one, and paleness in another, but a pestilence which has seized all. This is a wicked world, and we make part of it; therefore the way to be easy is to bear with each other. We say, *Such a man has given me great offence, and I never did him any hurt.* But I may have hurt other people, or I may happen to do it, and that is the same. *Such a man hath spoken ill of me;* but if I speak ill of him, as I do of many other people, it will only be a repayment, not an injury. Though he did overshoot himself, perhaps he was unwilling to lose his conceit; but there was no malice in it; and he must have done himself hurt, if he had not done it to me. There are many things which have appeared like injuries, and have turned out to be good offices; and many people after professed hatred have been in great friendship.

BEFORE we take any thing as an affront, let us ask ourselves if we have not done the § same thing to others. But where shall we find an equal judge? He that loves another man's wife (only perhaps because she is another's) will not allow his own to be so much as looked upon. No man is so

§ *Let no man condemn another, without making it his own case.*

fierce against calumny, as the evil speaker; none so strict exacters of modesty in a servant, as those that are most prodigal of their own. We carry our neighbours crimes in sight, and we throw our own over our shoulders. The intemperance of a bad son is chastised by a worse father; and the luxury that we punish in others, we allow to ourselves. The tyrant exclaims against homicide; and sacrilege against theft. We are angry with the persons, but not with the faults.

SOME things there are that cannot hurt us, and § others will not: As good magistrates, parents, tutors, judges; whose reproof or correction we are to take, as we do abstinence, bleeding, and other uneasy things, which we are the better for. In which cases, we are not so much to reckon upon what we suffer, as upon what we have done. *I take it ill*, says one; *and I have done nothing*, says another: When at the same time we make it worse, by adding arrogance and stubbornness to our first error. We cry out presently, *What law have we transgressed?* As if the letter of the law were the sum of our duty, and that piety, humanity, liberality, justice and faith were things beside our business. No, no, the rule of human duty is of a greater latitude; and we have many obligations upon us, that are not to be found in the *statute-books*. And yet we fall short of the exactness, even of that *legal innocency*. We have intended one thing, and done another; wherein only the want of success has kept us from being criminals. This very thing, methinks, should make us more favourable to offenders, and to forgive not only ourselves, but the Gods too; of whom we seem to have harder thoughts, in taking that to be a particular evil directed to us, that happens to us only by the common law of mortality. In short, no man living can absolve himself to his conscience, though to the world perhaps he may. It is true that we are also condemned to pains, and to death too, which is no more than quitting of this earthly body. No man should complain of bondage, for

every way he turns he is open to liberty. § *A stoical error.*
That river, that sea, that well, that precipice, there is freedom at the bottom of

it §. It hangs upon every crooked bough; a man's throat, his heart, and every vein of his body, is open to it. To conclude, I will have recourse to examples, where my proper virtue fails me. I will reflect, Am I greater than Philip or Augustus, who both put up with greater reproaches? Many people have forgiven their enemies, and shall I not pardon a neglect, a little freedom of the tongue? The patience of a second thought will do the business; for though the first shock be violent, take it in parts, and it is subdued. *Do as you would be done by:* This is the great lesson of mankind in this as well as in other cases.

CHAP. XII.

OF CRUELTY.

CRUELTY and anger are so much alike, that many people mistake the one for the other: As if cruelty were only the execution of anger, in the payment of a revenge: This holds good in some cases, but not in all. Some men take a pleasure in spilling human blood, and in the death of those who never did them any hurt, nor could be suspected for it; as Apollodorus, Phalaris, Sinis, Procrustus, and others, who burnt men alive. Those people we may call brutal, more properly than angry: As anger presupposes an injury, either imagined or done; but the other takes delight in tormenting, without having any reason to do so, and does mischief for mischief's sake. The original of this cruelty perhaps was anger; which by frequent exercise and custom has lost all sense of humanity and mercy; and they that are thus affected, are so far from the countenance and appearance

of men in anger, that they will laugh, rejoice, and entertain themselves with the most dreadful spectacles; as racks, goals, gibbets, and all kinds of chains and punishments; dilaceration of members, stigmatizings, and wild beasts; with other exquisite inventions of torture: And yet at last the cruelty itself is more horrid, and odious, than the means by which it works. It is a bestial madness to love mischief; beside, that it is womanish to rage and tear. A generous beast will be ashamed to do it, when he has any thing at his mercy. It is a vice for wolves, and tygers; and no less detestable to the world, than dangerous to itself.

THE Romans had their morning and
 § *The cruelty of* their § noon spectacles. In the former they
the Roman spec- had their combats of men with wild
tacles. beasts; and in the latter the men fought
 with each other. *I went* (says Seneca)
the other day to the noon spectacles, in hope of meeting some-
what of mirth and diversion, to sweeten the humours of those
that had been entertained with blood in the morning: But I
was disappointed; for compared with this inhumanity, the for-
mer was a mercy. The whole business was only murder upon
murder: The combatants fought naked, and every blow was a
wound. They did not contend for victory, but death; and he
that kills one man, is to be killed by another. By wounds they
are forced upon wounds, which they take, and give, upon their
bare breasts. Burn that rogue, they cry: What! Is he a-
fraid of his flesh? Do but see how sneakingly that rascal dies.
Look to yourselves, my masters, and consider of it: Who knows
but this may come to be your case? Wicked examples seldom
 fail of returning with redoubled force upon the authors. To
 destroy a single man, may be dangerous; but to murder
 whole nations, is only a more glorious wickedness. Private
 avarice and rigour are condemned: But oppression, when it
 comes to be authorized by an act of state; and to be publicly
 commanded, though particularly forbidden, becomes a point
 of dignity and honour. What a shame is it for men to de-

stroy one another, when yet the fiercest even of beasts are at peace with those of their own species? This brutal fury puts philosophy itself to a stand. The drunkard, the glutton, the covetous may be reduced. Nay, and the mischief of it is, that no vice keeps itself within its proper bounds. Luxury runs into avarice, and when the reverence of virtue is laid aside, men will stick at nothing that carries profit with it. Man's blood is shed in wantonness; his death is a spectacle for entertainment, and his groans are musick. When Alexander delivered up Lyfimachus to a lion, how glad would he have been to have had nails and teeth to have devoured him himself? It would have too much derogated, he thought, from the dignity of wrath, to have appointed a man for the execution of his friend. Private cruelties, it is true, cannot do much mischief, but in princes they are a war against mankind.

C. CÆSAR would frequently, for exercise, and pleasure, put senators, and Roman knights to the torture; and whip several of them, like slaves, or put them to death with the most excruciating torments, merely for the satisfaction of his cruelty. That Cæsar that *wished the people of Rome had but one neck, that he might cut it off at one blow.* It was the employment, the study, and the joy of his life. He would not so much as give the expiring leave to groan, but caused their mouths to be stoppt with sponges, or for want of them, with rags of their own cloaths, that they might not breathe out so much as their last agonies at liberty; or perhaps, lest the tormented should speak something which the tormentor did not chuse to hear. Nay, he was so impatient of delay, that he would frequently rise from supper to have men killed by torch light, as if his life and death had depended upon their dispatch before the next morning. To say nothing how many fathers were put to death by him in the same night with their sons, (which was a kind of mercy in the prevention of their mourning.) And was not Sylla's cru-

elty terrible too, which was only stopt for want of enemies? He caused seven thousand citizens of Rome to be butchered at once; and some of the senators being startled at their cries that were heard in the senate-house: *Let us mind our business*, says Sylla, *this is nothing but a few mutineers that I have ordered to be dispatched.* A glorious spectacle! says Hannibal, when he saw the trenches flowing with human blood; and if the rivers had run blood too, it would have been so much the more agreeable to him.

AMONG the famous and detestable speeches that are committed to memory, I know none worse than that impu-

dent, and tyrannical maxim; § *Let them hate me, so they fear me:* Not considering that those that are kept in obedience by fear, are both malicious and mercenary, and only wait for an opportunity to change their master. Beside that, whosoever is terrible to others, is also afraid of himself. What is more common, than for a tyrant to be murdered by his own guards? Which is no more than the putting those crimes in practice which they learned of their masters. How many slaves have revenged themselves of their cruel oppressors, though they were sure to die for it? But when it comes once to a popular tyranny, whole nations conspire against it. For *whosoever threatens all, is in danger of all;* over and above, that the cruelty of a prince increases the number of his enemies, by destroying some of them; for it entails an hereditary hatred upon the friends and relations of those that are taken away. And then it has this misfortune, that a man must be wicked upon necessity; for there is no going back; so that he betakes himself to arms, and yet he lives in perpetual dread. He can trust neither to the piety of his children, nor to the faith of his friends; he both wishes for death, and dreads it; and becomes a greater terror to himself than to his people. Indeed, if there was nothing else to make cruelty hateful, it is sufficient that it passes all

bounds of humanity, and must be followed by poison or sword. Private malice, it is true, does not affect the publick in general; but that which extends to all, affects every body. One sick person is no great inconvenience in a family; but in case of a general sickness every one avoids it. And can a prince who has taught a man to be wicked, expect him to be good?

IF cruelty were safe, the very state of such a government would be a terrible thing; a * government which resembles a taken city, that wears the face of sorrow and confusion. Men cannot trust themselves with their friends or pleasures, where the most innocent entertainments are a pretence for crime and danger. People are betrayed at their own table, and in their cups, and are dragged from the very theatre to prison: What a terrible madness is it to be still raging and killing, and to have the disagreeable rattling of chains perpetually in our ears, bloody spectacles before our eyes, and to be constantly in fears! We could not be worse if we had lions and serpents to rule over us; for indeed they agree better. Laying whole kingdoms waste, and burning cities, is a mark of greatness; nor is it so much honour to a prince to appoint a single man to be killed; the glory is in having whole troops to work upon. But bloody trophies and the spoils of war will not make a prince glorious; it is the divine power of unity and peace. Nor is fierce anger becoming in a supreme magistrate. Cruelty is a sign of weakness, and brings a governor upon a level with a competitor: a great mind is always humble and meek.

** Tyrannical government is a continual state of war.*



SENECA

O F

CLEMENCY.

EVERY body owns the excellency of clemency; even the men of pleasure, as well as those who think every man was made for himself, as the Stoicks do, that make *man a reasonable creature for the good of mankind in general*; for it is the most peaceable and quiet of all dispositions. But before we go farther, let us learn what *clemency* is, that we may distinguish it from pity: which is a weakness often mistaken for a virtue; and the next thing will be to inure the mind to the habit and exercise of it.

CLEMENCY is a favourable disposition
Clemency defined. in regard to inflicting punishment; or, a moderation that remits somewhat of the penalty incurred; as forgiveness is the total remission of a deserved punishment. We must take care not to mistake pity for clemency; for as religion worships God, and superstition profanes that worship; so we should distinguish betwixt pity and clemency; practising the one and avoiding the other. Pity proceeds from a narrow mind, respecting the fortune rather than the cause. It is a sort of moral sickness, contracted from other people's misfortunes; such a weakness as yawning, or laughing for company; or as eyes which can-

not look at fore ones, without being smitten. I would give a lodging to a stranger, a plank to a shipwrecked man, or money to the needy; I would dry up the tears of a friend, yet I will not weep with him, but use him humanely as one man ought to use another.

SOME object, that *clemency* is an insignificant virtue; and that only the bad are the better for it; for the good have no need of it. But in the first place, as physick is in use only among the sick, and yet in honour with the healthy; so the innocent have a reverence for clemency, though criminals are properly the objects of it. And then again, a man may be innocent, and yet have occasion for it too: For by the accidents of fortune, or the condition of times, virtue itself may come to be in danger. Consider the most populous city, or nation; what a solitude would it be, if none should be left there but those that could stand the test of a severe justice? We should have neither judges, nor accusers; none either to grant a pardon, or to ask it. More or less, we are all sinners; and he that has best purged his conscience, was brought by errors to repentance. And it is farther profitable to mankind; for many delinquents come to be converted. There is a tenderness to be used, even toward our slaves, and those that we have bought with our money: How much more then to free, and to honest men, that are rather under our protection than dominion? Not that I would have it so general neither, as not to distinguish betwixt the good, and the bad; for that would introduce a confusion, and give a kind of encouragement to wickedness. It must therefore have a respect to the quality of the offender, and separate the curable from the desperate; for it is an equal cruelty to pardon all, and to pardon none. Where the matter is in balance, let mercy turn the scale: If all wicked men should be punished, very few would escape.

THOUGH mercy and gentleness of nature keeps all in peace, and tranquillity, *Clemency does well*

in private persons, but it is more beneficial in princes.

even in a cottage; Yet it is much more beneficial, and conspicuous in a palace. Private men in their condition, are likewise private in their virtues, and in their vices; but the words and the actions of princes are the subject of publick rumour; and therefore, they had need be careful what occasion they give people for discourse, of whom people will be always talking. There is the government of a prince over his people, a father over his children, a master over his scholars, an officer over his soldiers. He is an unnatural father, that for every trifle beats his children. Who is the better master, he that rages over his scholars, for but missing a word in a lesson: or he that tries by admonition, and fair words, to instruct and reform them? An outrageous officer makes his men run from their colours. A skilful rider brings his horse to obedience, by mingling fair means with foul; whereas to be constantly switching and spurring, makes him vicious and jadish: And shall we not have more care of men than of beasts? It breaks the hope of generous inclinations, when they are depressed by servility and terror. There is no creature so hard to be pleased with ill usage, as man.

** Mercy is the interest as well of prince as people.*

CLEMENCY does well with all, but best with * princes; for it makes their power comfortable, and beneficial, which would otherwise be the pest of mankind. It establishes their greatness when they make the good of the publick their particular care, and employ their power for the safety of the people. The prince, in effect, is but the soul of the community; as the community is only the body of the prince: So that being merciful to others, he is tender of himself: Nor is any man so mean, but his master feels the loss of him, as a part of his empire: And he takes care not only of the lives of his people, but also of their reputation. Now, giving for granted, that all virtues are in themselves equal, it will not yet be denied, that they may

be more beneficial to mankind in one person, than in another. Abeggar may be as magnanimous as a king: For what can be greater, or braver, than to defy ill fortune? This does not hinder, but that a man in authority and plenty, has more matter for his generosity to work upon, than a private person; and it is also more taken notice of upon the bench, than upon the level. When a gracious prince shews himself to his people, they do not fly from him as from a tyger, that roused himself out of his den; but they worship him as a benevolent influence; they secure him against all conspiracies; and interpose their bodies betwixt him and danger. They are his guard while he sleeps, and his defence in the field against his enemies. Nor is it without reason, this unanimous agreement in love and loyalty; and this heroical zeal of abandoning themselves for the safety of their prince; but it is as well the interest of the people. In the breath of a prince there is life and death; and his sentence stands good, right or wrong. If he be angry, no body dares advise him; and if he does amiss, who shall call him to account? Now for him that has so much mischief in his power, and yet applies that power to the common utility, and comfort of his people, diffusing also clemency and goodness into their hearts too: What can be a greater blessing to mankind than such a prince? Any man may kill another against the law, but only a prince can save him so. Let him so deal with his own subjects, as he chuses God should deal with him: If heaven should be inexorable to sinners, and destroy all without mercy, who could be safe? But as the faults of great men are not presently punished with thunder from above, let them have a like regard to their inferiors here upon earth. He that has revenge in his power, and does not use it, is the real great man. Which is the more beautiful, and agreeable state, that of a calm, a temperate, and a clear day; or that of lightning, thunder, and tempests? And this is the very difference betwixt a moderate, and a turbulent government. It is for low, and vulgar spirits to brawl, storm and transport them-

selves; but it is not for the majesty of a prince to lash out into intemperance of words. Some will think it rather slavery, than empire to be debarred of liberty of speech: And what if it be, when government itself is but a more illustrious servitude? He that uses his power as he should; takes as much delight in making it comfortable to his people, as glorious to himself. He is affable, and easy of access; his very countenance makes him the joy of his people's eyes, and the delight of mankind. He is beloved, defended and revered by all his subjects; and men speak as well of him in private, as in publick: He is safe without guards, and the sword is rather his ornament, than his defence: In his duty, he is like that of a good father, that sometimes gently reproves a son, sometimes threatens him; nay, and perhaps corrects him: But no father in his right wits, will disinheret a son for the first fault: There must be many, and great offences, and only desperate consequences that should bring him to that decretory resolution: He will make many experiments, to try if he can reclaim him first, and nothing but the utmost despair must put him upon extremities. It is not flattery that calls a prince *the father of his country*: The titles of *great* and *august*, are matter of compliment, and of honour; but in calling him father, we mind him of that moderation, and indulgence, which he owes to his children. His subjects are his members; where, if there must be an amputation, let him come slowly to it; and when the part is cut off, let him wish it on again. Let him grieve in the doing of it. He that passes a sentence hastily, looks as if he did it willingly; and then there is an injustice in the excess.

The happy reflections of a merciful prince.

IT is a noble contemplation for a prince, first to consider the multitudes of his people, whose seditious, divided, and impotent passions, would cast all into confusion, and destroy themselves, and publick order too, if the band of government did not restrain them:

And thence to pass to the examination of his conscience, saying thus to himself, "It is by the choice of Providence that I am here made God's deputy upon earth; the arbitrator of life, and death; and that upon my breath depends the fortune of my people. My lips are the oracles of their fate, and upon them hangs the destiny both of cities and of men. It is under my favour that people seek for either prosperity, or protection: Thousands of swords are drawn or sheathed at my pleasure. What towns shall be advanced or destroyed; who shall be slaves, or who free, depends upon my will; and yet in this arbitrary power of acting without controul, I was never transported to do any cruel thing, either by anger, or hot blood in myself, or by the contumacy, rashness, or provocations of other men; tho' sufficient to turn mercy itself into fury. I was never moved by the odious vanity of making myself terrible by my power (that accursed (though common) humour of ostentation and glory, that haunts imperious natures.) My sword has not only been buried in the scabbard, but in a manner bound to the peace, and tender even of the cheapest blood: And where I find no other motive to compassion, humanity itself is sufficient. I have been always slow to severity, and ready to forgive; and under as strict a guard to observe the laws, as if I were accountable for the breaking of them. Some I have pardoned for their youth; others for their age. I spare one man for his dignity, another for his humility; and when I find no other matter to work upon, I spare myself. So that if God should at this instant call me to account, the whole world would agree to witness for me, that I have not by any force, either publick or private: either by myself, or by any other, defrauded the commonwealth; and the reputation that I have ever sought for, has been that which few princes have obtained, the conscience of my proper innocence. And I have not lost my labour neither, for no one man was ever so dear to another, as I have made myself to the whole

“ body of my people. Under such a prince the subject has
 “ nothing to desire, beyond what he enjoys; their fears are
 “ quieted, and their prayers heard; and there is nothing can
 “ make their felicity greater, unless to make it perpetual;
 “ and there is no liberty denied to the people, but that of
 “ destroying each other.

*The safety of
 the people de-
 pends upon the
 well-being of
 the prince.*

IT is the interest of the people, by the consent of all nations, to run all hazards for the safety of their prince, and by a thousand deaths to redeem that one life, upon which such vast numbers depend. Does not the whole body serve the mind, though only the one is exposed to the eye, and the other not; but, thin, and invisible, the very seat of it being uncertain? Yet the hands, feet, and eyes observe the motions of it: we lie down, run about, and ramble, as that commands us. If we be covetous, we fish the sea, and ransack the earth for treasure; if ambitious, we burn our own flesh with Scævola; we throw ourselves into the gulph with Curtius; so would that prodigious multitude of people, which is animated but with one soul, governed by one spirit, and moved by one reason, destroy itself with its own strength, if it were not supported by wisdom, and government. Wherefore it is for their own security, that the people expose their lives for their prince, as the very bond that ties the republick together; the vital spirit of so many thousands, which would be nothing else but a burden and prey, without a governor. When this union comes once to be dissolved, all falls to pieces; for empire, and obedience must stand, and fall together. It is no wonder then, if a prince be dear to his people, when the community is wrapt up in him, and the good of both are inseparable as the body and the head; the one for strength, and the other for counsel; for what signifies the strength of the body, without the direction of the understanding? While the prince watches, his people sleep; his labour keeps them at ease. The natural intent of monarchy appears even from

the very discipline of bees: they assign to their master the best lodgings, the safest place; and his office is only to see, and the rest perform their duties. When their king is lost, the whole swarm dissolves: more than one, they will not admit; and then they contend who shall have the best: they are of all creatures the boldest, for their bigness, and leave their stings behind them in their quarrels; only the king himself has none, intimating, that kings should neither be vindictive nor cruel. Is it not a shame, after such an example of moderation in these creatures, that men should be yet intemperate? It were well if they lost their stings too in their revenge, as well as the other, that they might hurt but once, and do no mischief by their proxies. It would tire them out, if either they were to execute all with their own hands, or to wound others, at the peril of their own lives.

A PRINCE should behave himself generously † in the power, which God has given him, of life and death; especially toward those that have been at any time his equals; for the one has his revenge, and the other his punishment in it. He that stands indebted for his life, has lost it; but he that receives his life at the foot of his enemy, lives to the honour of his preserver. He lives the lasting monument of his virtue; whereas if he had been led in triumph, the spectacle would have been soon over. Or what if he should restore him to his kingdom again; would it not be an ample accession to his honour, to shew that he found nothing about the conquered that was worthy of the conqueror? There is nothing more venerable than a prince that does not revenge an injury. He that is gracious, is beloved, and revered as a common father: but a tyrant stands in fear, and in danger even of his own guards. No prince can be safe himself, of whom all others are afraid; for to spare none is to enrage all. It is absurd to suppose that any man can be safe, that suffers no body else to be so too. How can any man bear to lead an uneasy, suspicious, anxious life,

when he may be safe, if he pleases, and enjoy all the blessings of power, together with the prayers of his people? Clemency protects a prince without a guard; there is no need of troops, castles, or fortifications: security on the one side, is the condition of security on the other; and the affections of the subject are the most invincible fortress. What can be fairer, than some prince to live the object of his people's love; to have the vows of their heart, as well as of their lips; and his health and sickness, their common hopes and fears; there will be no danger of plots: nay, on the contrary, who would not freely venture his blood to serve him, under whose government, justice, peace, modesty, and dignity flourish; under whose influence men grow rich, and happy; and whom men look upon with such veneration, as they would do upon the immortal Gods, if they were capable of seeing them? And as the true representative of the Almighty they consider him, when he is gracious, and bountiful, and employs his power to the advantage of his subjects.

WHEN a prince proceeds to punishment, ‡
 ‡ *Where punishment is necessary, let it be moderate.* it must be either to vindicate himself, or others. It is difficult to govern himself in his own case. If a man should advise him not to be credulous, but to examine matters, and indulge the innocent, this is rather a point of justice than of clemency: but, in case that he be manifestly injured, I would have him *forgive*, where he may *safely* do it; and be *tender* even where he cannot *forgive*; But far more exorable in his own case however, than in another's. It is nothing to be free of another man's purse; and it is a little to be merciful in another man's cause. He is the great man that masters his passion where he is stung himself; and pardons when he might destroy. The end of punishment, is either to comfort the party injured, or to secure him for the future. A prince's fortune is above the need of such a comfort, and his power is too great to desire an advance of reputation, by hurting a private man. This I speak,

in case of an affront from those that are below us: but he that of an equal has made any man his inferior, has his revenge, in the bringing of him down. *A prince* has been killed by a *servant*, destroyed by a serpent; but whosoever preserves a man must be greater than the person that he preserves. With citizens, strangers, and people of low condition, a prince is not to contend, for they are beneath him: he may spare some out of good will, and others, as he would do some creatures that a man cannot touch without dirtying his fingers: but for those that are to be forgiven, or exposed to publick punishment, he may be merciful as he sees occasion; and a generous mind can never want inducements, and motives to it; and whether it be *age*, or *sex*, *high*, or *low*, nothing comes wrong.

To pass now to the vindication of others, ‡ *The ends of* there must be had a ‡ regard either to the a- *punishment.* amendment of the person punished, or the making others better for fear of punishment; or the taking the offender out of the way, for the security of others. An amendment may be procured by a small punishment; for he lives more carefully that has something yet to lose; it is a kind of *impunity*, to be incapable of a *farther punishment*. The corruptions of a city are best cured by a few and sparing severities; for the multitude of offenders creates a custom of offending, and company authorizes a crime, and there is more good to be done upon a *dissolute age*, by *patience* than by *severity*, provided that it pass not for an *approbation of ill manners*; but only as an *unwillingness* to proceed to *extremities*. Under a merciful prince a man will be ashamed to offend; because a punishment that is inflicted by a gentle governor, seems to fall heavier, and with more reproach: and it is remarkable also, that *Those sins are often committed, which are very often punished*. Caligula, in five years, condemned more people to the *Sack*, than ever were before him: and there were *fewer parricides before that law against them, than after*. For our ancestors did wisely presume that

the crime would never be committed, till by a law for punishing it they found that it might be done. Parricides began with the *law* against them, and the punishments instructed men in the crime. Where there are few punishments, innocence is indulged as a publick good, and it is a dangerous thing to shew a city how strong it is in delinquents. There is a certain contumacy in the nature of man, that makes him oppose difficulties. We are better to follow than to drive; as a generous horse rides best with an easy bit. People *obey willingly*, where they are *commanded kindly*. When Burrhus the prefect was to sentence two malefactors, he brought the warrant to Nero to sign; who after a long reluctancy came to it at last with this exclamation, *I wish I could not write*. A speech that deserved the whole world for an auditory, but all princes especially; and that the hearts of all the subjects would conform to the likeness of their masters. As the head is well, or ill, so is the mind dull, or merry. What is the difference betwixt a *king*, and a *tyrant*, but a *diversity of will*, under one and *the same power*? The one destroys for his pleasure, the other upon necessity: A distinction rather in fact, than in name. A gracious prince is armed as well as a tyrant; but it is for the defence of his people, and not for the ruin of them. No king can ever have faithful servants that accustoms them to tortures and executions: the very guilty themselves do not lead so anxious a life as the persecutors; for they are not only afraid of justice, both divine and human, but it is dangerous for them to mend their manners, so that when they are once in, they must continue to be wicked upon necessity. An universal hatred unites in a popular rage. A temperate fear may be kept in order; but when it comes once to be perpetual and sharp, it provokes people to extremities, and transports them to desperate resolutions: as wild beasts, when they are prest upon the *toil*, turn back, and assault the very pursuers. A turbulent government is a continual trouble both to prince and people; and he that is a terror to all others, is not without fear also him-

self. Frequent punishments and revenges may suppress the hatred of a few, but then it stirs up the detestation of all. So that there is no destroying one enemy without making many. It is good to master the *will* of being *cruel*, even while there may be *cause* for it, and *matter* to work upon.

AUGUSTUS was a gracious † prince when he had the power in his own hand; † *A particular instance of Augustus's clemency.* but in the *triumviracy* he made use of his sword, and had his friend ready armed to set upon Anthony, during that dispute. But he behaved himself afterwards at another rate;

for when he was betwixt forty and fifty years of age, he was told that Cinna was in a plot to murder him, with the time, place, and manner of the design; and this from one of the confederates. Upon this he determined upon a revenge, and sent for several of his friends to advise upon it. The thought of it kept him waking, to consider, that there was the life of a young nobleman in the case, the nephew of Pompey, and a person otherwise innocent. He was off and on several times, whether he should put him to death or not. "What" (says he) "shall I live in trouble, and in danger myself, and the contriver of my death walk free, and secure? Will nothing serve him but that life, which providence has preserved in so many civil wars; in so many battles, both by sea and land; and now, in the state of an universal peace too? and not a simple murder neither, but a sacrifice; for I am to be assaulted at the very altar; and shall the contriver of all this villany escape unpunished?" Here Augustus made a little pause, and then recollecting himself: "no, no, Cæsar," (says he) "it is rather Cæsar than Cinna, that I am to be angry with: why do I myself live any longer, after that my death is become the interest of so many people? And if I go on, what end will there be of blood, and of punishment? If it be against my life that the nobility arms itself, and levels their weapons; my single life is not worth the while, if so many

" must be destroyed that I may be preserved." His wife Livia interrupted him here, and desired that he would for once take a woman's advice. " Do" (says she) " like a physician, that when common remedies fail, will try the contrary. You have got nothing hitherto by severity; after Salvidianus there followed Lepidus; after him Muræna; Cæpio followed him, and Egnétius followed Cæpio: try now what mercy will do; pardon Cinna. He is discovered, and can do you no hurt in your person; and it will yet advantage you in your reputation." Augustus was glad of the advice, and was thankful for it; and thereupon countermanded the meeting of his friends, and ordered Cinna to be brought to him alone; for whom he causes a chair to be set, and then discharged the rest of the company. " Cinna," (says Augustus) " before I go any further, you must promise not to give me the interruption of one syllable, till I have told you all I have to say, and you shall have liberty afterwards to say what you please. You cannot forget, that when I found you in arms against me, and not only made my enemy, but born so; I gave you your life and fortune. Upon your petition for the priesthood, I granted it, with a repulse to the sons of those that had been my fellow-soldiers; and you are at this day so happy and so rich, that even the conquerors envy him that is overcome; and yet after all this you are in a plot, Cinna, to murder me." At that word Cinna started, and interposed with exclamations, " that certainly he was far from being either so wicked, or so mad." " This is breach of condition, Cinna," (says Augustus) " it is not your time to speak yet. I tell you again that you are in a plot to murder me;" and so he told him the time, the place, the confederates, the order and manner of the design, and who it was to do the deed. Cinna, upon this, fixed his eye upon the ground, without any reply; not for his word-sake, but as in a confusion of conscience; and so Augustus went on. " What" (says he) " may your design be in all this? Is it that you would pre-

"tend to step into my place? The commonwealth were in
 "an ill condition, if only Augustus were in the way betwixt
 "you and the government. You were cast the other day, in
 "a cause, by one of our own freemen; and do you expect to
 "find a weaker adversary of Cæsar? But, what if I were re-
 "moved? There is Æmilius Paulus, Fabius Maximus, and
 "twenty other families of great blood, and interest, that
 "would never suffer it." To make the story short; (for it
 was a discourse of about two hours; and Augustus length-
 ned the punishment in *words*, since he intended that should
 be all.) "Well, Cinna," says he, "the life that I gave to you
 "once, as an enemy, I will now repeat it to a traitor, and to
 "a parricide, and this shall be the last reproach I will give
 "you. For the time to come, there shall be no other diffe-
 "rence betwixt you and me, than which shall out-do the o-
 "ther in point of friendship." After this Augustus made
 Cinna *consul*, (an honour, which, he confessed, he durst not
 so much as desire) and Cinna was ever affectionately faithful
 to him; he made Cæsar his *sole heir*; and this was the *last*
conspiracy that was formed against him.

THIS moderation of Augustus was * the * *Augustus's*
 excellency of his mature age; for in his *moderation to*
 youth he was passionate, and sudden: and he *his enemies.*
 did many things, which afterward he looked
 back upon with concern. After the battle of Actium, so
 many navies broken in Sicily, both Roman and *strangers*:
 the Perusian altars; (where 300 *lives* were sacrificed to the
ghosts of Julius) his frequent *proscriptions*, and other severi-
 ties; his *temperance* at last seemed to be little more than a
weary cruelty. If he had not *pardoned* those that he *conque-*
red, whom should he have governed? He chose his very *life-*
guard from among his *enemies*, and the *flower* of the Romans
 owed their *lives* to his *clemency*. Nay, he only punished Le-
 pidus himself with *banishment*; and allowed him to wear the
ensigns of his *dignity*, without taking the *pontificate* to him-
 self, so long as Lepidus was living; for he would not possess

it as a *spoil*, but as an *honour*. This clemency it was that secured him in his greatness, and ingratiated him to the people, though he laid his hand upon the government before they has thoroughly submitted to the yoke; and this clemency it was, that has made his *name famous to posterity*. This is it, that makes us reckon him *divine*, without the authority of an *apothecosis*. He was so tender and patient, that though many a bitter jest was broken upon him (and *contumelies* upon princes are the most *intolerable* of all *injuries*) yet he never punished any man upon that subject. *It is then generous to be merciful, when we have it in our power to take revenge.*

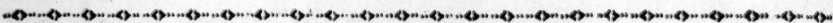
A son of Titus Arius being examined,
 * *A merciful judgment of Augustus.* and found * guilty of *parricide*, was banished Rome, and confined to Marseilles: every body concluded him guilty, as his father continued his annuity as usual, which appeared as if he condemned the son he loved. Augustus thought proper to sit upon the fact in the house of Arius, as a single member of the council, which was to examine it: had it been in Cæsar's palace, the judgment must have been Cæsar's, and not the father's. Upon a full hearing of the affair, Cæsar ordered that every man should write his opinion, whether *guilty* or *not*, and without declaring his opinion, for fear of a partial vote. Before the books were opened, Cæsar passed an oath, that he would not be Arius's *beir*; and to shew he had no interest in his sentence, as appeared afterwards; for he was not condemned to a prison, nor to the common punishment of parricides; but by the mediation of Cæsar, only banished Rome, and confined to a place which should be appointed by his father. Augustus insisted that the father should be satisfied with an easy punishment, and pled that the young man was not moved to the attempt by malice; that he wavered in the fact, and was not determined, and therefore thought that to remove him from the city, and his father's presence, would be a sufficient punishment. To

be merciful is glorious and praise-worthy in a prince. How miserable must that man be, who when he has employed his power in rapine and cruelty upon others, is still more unhappy in himself! He stands in awe both of his domesticks and strangers; the faith of his friends, and piety of his children; and flies to real violence, to protect him from the violence he fears. When he comes to reflect what he *has* done, what he is *about* to do, and what he *must* do; what with his wickedness, and what with the torments of his conscience, he often wishes for death, and many times fears it; he lives more odious to himself than to his subjects: whereas he who makes the publick his care, though one part more than another, yet he esteems every part of it as part of himself. His mind is gentle and tender, and even where it is necessary to punish, he does it unwillingly, and without malice or enmity in his mind. In short, let the authority be what it will, clemency is commendable, and the greater the power, the greater the glory. For a prince to deliver his people from other men's anger, and not to oppress them with his own, is a truly royal virtue.





E P I S T L E S.



E P I S T L E I.

General Directions for the Government of the Voice, as in speaking Soft or Loud; Slow or Quick: the Speech is the Index of the Mind.

YOU say right, that in speaking, the very tuning of the voice (not to mention the countenance and actions which accompany it) deserves the consideration of a wise man. There are people who prescribe particular modes of rising and falling: nay, if you will be ruled by them, you must not move or eat but by rule; and perhaps critical rules too. You must not understand me, as if I made no difference betwixt entering upon a discourse loud or soft; for the affections do naturally rise by degrees; and, in all disputes, private or publick, a man should begin modestly, with temper, and advance by degrees, if necessary, into clamour and vociferation; and let it fall by degrees, not suddenly snapping of, but abating moderately. He who has a precipitate speech, is generally violent in his manners; and there is much vanity and emptiness in it: no man has pleasure in a number of words, without choice; where the noise is more than the value. Fabius was eminent for his eloquence, as well as learning; his speech was not quick, but rather easy and sliding; as he reckoned quick speech not only liable to many errors, but also to a suspicion of immodesty. If a man have

ever so many words at will, he will no more speak fast than he will run, for fear his tongue should go before his wit. A *philosopher's* speech should resemble his life, composed, without pressing or stumbling; which is more proper for a mountebank, than a man of sobriety and business. And on the other side, it is as tedious to drop one word after another: the interruption is tiresome to the hearer. Truth, and morality should be delivered in plain words, and without affectation; for, like remedies, unless they stay with us, we are never the better for them. He that would work upon his hearers, must no more expect to do it upon the post, than a physician to cure his patients, only in passing by them. Not but that I would have a wise man, in some cases, to raise himself, and mend his pace; but still with a regard to the dignity of his manners; though there may be a great force also in moderation. I would have his discourse smooth, and flowing like a river; not impetuous like a torrent. There is a rapid, lawless and irrevocable velocity of speech, which I would hardly allow, even to an orator; for if he be transported with passion, or ostentation, a man's attention can hardly keep him company. It is not the quantity, but the pertinence, that does the business. Let the words of an ancient man flow soft, and gentle; let those of an orator come off round, and powerful; but not run on without fear, or wit, as if a whole declamation were to be but one period. Cicero wrote with care, and that which will for ever stand the test. All publick languages are according to the humour of the age. A wantonness, and effeminacy of speech, denotes luxury; for the wit follows the mind! if the mind be sound, composed, temperate, and grave; the wit is coy, and sober too: but if the one be corrupted, the other is likewise unsound. We see, when a man's mind is heavy, how he creeps, and draws his legs after him? A finical temper is seen in the very gestures and cloaths; if a man be cholerick, and violent, it is also discovered in his motions. An angry man speaks short, and quick; the speech of an effeminate

man is loose and melting. A solicitous way of speaking is a sign of a weak mind; a great man speaks with more assurance, ease and freedom, and less care. Speech is the *index* of the mind: When you see a man dress, and set his cloaths in print, you may be certain of finding his words so too; and nothing that is steady in them: *Delicacy* is not becoming in a *man*. As it is in drink, the tongue never trips, till the mind is overborn; so it is with speech, while the mind is sound and whole, the speech is strong and masculine; but when one fails, the other follows.



E P I S T L E II.

Of Stiles, Compositions, and the Choice of Words. The best Way of Writing and Speaking, is that which is free and natural. Advice concerning Reading.

THERE can be no universal certain rule for the stile or manner of speaking and writing; they vary according to occasion: So we must satisfy ourselves with speaking in *general*. People commonly write and speak according to the humour of the age they live in: And there is also a correspondence betwixt the language and life of particular people: One may have a pretty good idea of a man from his cloaths and manner. In the first place, let the sense be honest, noble, and substantial; nothing superfluous, the words suitable to the manner. When it is a familiar subject, use a familiar stile; and noble thoughts ought to have suitable expressions: There should be a sort of transport in the one, to answer it in the other. It is not difficult to compose a pleasant fable, and tickle the fancy; but he that treats of matters of consequence, must do it in the grave and sober terms. There are some who have not so much of the vigour of an orator, or of that sententious sharpness; and yet the worthiness

of the sense makes amends for the lowness of the stile. Our ancestors were not at all delighted with fine words, and flowers: But their compositions were strong, equal, and manly. We have now a-days here and there a point; but the work is uneven, where only this or that particular is remarkable. We never admire this, or that single tree, where the whole wood is all of a height. A specious title page may recommend a book to sale, but not for use. An eminent author is to be taken down whole, and not here and there a bit. It is a maiming of the body to take the members of it apart; nor is it a handsome leg, or arm that makes a handsome man; but the symmetry, and agreement of all together. It is the excellency of speaking, and writing, to do it close, and in words agreeable to the intention; and I would yet have something more to be signified than is delivered. It being also a mark of strength and solidity of judgment. The propriety of words, in some cases is surprising; especially when we are well read in the knowledge of things, and of duties, and there is a particular grace in the gentleness of numbers, when they run smooth, and without perturbation. Some are raised and startled at words, as a horse is at a drum; and induce the very passion of the speaker. Others are moved with the beauty of things; and when they hear any thing bravely urged against death, or fortune, they secretly wish for some occasion of experimenting that generosity in themselves. But not one of a thousand of them, that carries the resolution home with him that he had conceived. It is an easy matter to excite an auditory to the love of goodness, having already the foundation and the seeds of virtue within themselves: So that it is but awakening the consideration of it, where all men are agreed beforehand upon the main. Who is so fordid as not to be roused at such a speech as this? *The poor man wants many things, but the covetous wants all.* Can any flesh forbear being pleased with this saying, though a satire against his own vice? As to forced metaphors, and wild hyperboles, I would leave them to the poets. And I am quite against

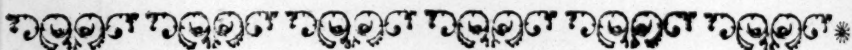
fooling with tinkling conceits, and sounds: Not that I would wholly forbid the use of *hyperboles*; which, although they exceed the truth, may yet be a means, by things incredible, to bring us unto things credible. And there may be great use made also of *parables*: For the way of application does usually affect the mind more than the downright meaning. The speech which gains upon the passions, is much more profitable than that which only works upon the judgment. Chrysippus was a great man, and of an acute wit; but the edge of it was so fine, that every thing turned it; and he might be said, in truth, rather to prick the subject that he handled, than to pierce it through.

As it is not for the honour of a *philosopher* to be solicitous about words, I would not have him negligent neither: But let him speak with assurance, and without affectation. If we can, let our discourses be powerful; but however, let them be clear. I like a composition that is nervous and strong; but yet I would have it sweet and gracious withal. There are many things, I know, that please well enough in the delivery, and yet will hardly abide the test of an examination. But that eloquence is mischievous, that diverts a man from things to words, and little better than a prostitution of letters. For what signifies the pomp of words or the jumbling of syllables, to the making up of a wise man? Tully's composition indeed is equal, his numbers are harmonious, free, and gentle; and yet he takes a care not to make any forfeiture of his gravity. Fabian is a great man, in being second to Cicero. Pollio is a great man too, though a step below him; and so is Livy likewise, though he comes after the other three. But several subjects require several excellencies. An *orator* should be sharp; the *tragedian* great, and the *comedian* pleasant. When a man declaims against vice, let him be bitter; against danger, bold; against fortune, proud; against ambition, reproachful: Let him chide luxury, defame lust: An impotency of mind must be broken. In these cases, words are the least part of an honest man's business.

IN the matter of composition, I would write as I speak; with ease and freedom; for it is more friendly, as well as more natural: And so much my inclination, that if I could make my mind visible to you, I would neither speak nor write it. If I put my thoughts in good sense, the matter of ornament I shall leave to the *orators*. There are some things that a man may write even as he travels; others that require privacy and time. But, however, it is good in writing, as in other cases, to leave the best bit to the last. A *philosopher* has no more to do, than to speak properly, and in words that express his meaning. And this may be done without tossing of the hands, stamping, or any other violent agitation of the body; without either the vanity of the theatre on the one hand, or an insipid heaviness on the other. I would have his speech as plain and simple as his life; for he is then as good as his word, when both hearing him and seeing him, we find him to be the same person. And yet if a man can be eloquent without more trouble than the thing is worth, let him use his faculty: Provided that he value himself upon the matter more than the words; and apply himself rather to the understanding, than to the fancy; for this is a business of virtue, not a trial of wit. Who is there that would not rather have a healing, than a rhetorical *physician*? But for esteeming any man purely upon the score of his rhetorick, I would as soon chuse a pilot for a good head of hair.

IN the matter of reading; I would fix upon some particular authors, and make them my own. He that is every where, is no where; but like a man that spends his life in travel, he has many hosts but few friends. Which is the very situation of him, that skips from one book to another: The variety does but distract his head, and for want of digesting, it turns to corruption, instead of nourishment. It is a good argument of a well-composed mind, when a man loves home, and to keep company with himself: Whereas a rambling head is a certain sign of a sickly humour. Many books, and many acquaintances, bring a man to a levity of disposition,

and a liking of change. What is the body the better for meat, that will not stay with it? Nor is there any thing more hurtful in the case of diseases, or wounds, than the frequent shifting of physick, or plaisters. Of *authors*, be sure to make choice of the best; and (as I said before) to stick close to them; and though you take up others by the by, reserve some select ones, however, for your study, and retreat. In the course of your reading, you will always meet with consolation against poverty, and all the calamities human life is liable to: Extract what you please, and then set aside some particular from the rest, for the day's meditation. Reading entertains as well as feeds the understanding; when a man is dosed with one study, he relieves himself with another: Reading and writing should be taken by turns. While meat lies whole upon the stomach, it is a burden; but upon digestion, it passes into blood and strength. It is the same case with our studies; while they lie whole, they pass into the memory without affecting the understanding; but upon meditation, they become our own, and give us virtue and strength. The bee, who wanders and sips from every flower, disposes what she has gathered into her cells.



E P I S T L E III.

Against Affectation in Conversation, fantastical Studies, impertinent and idle Arts. The Business of Man is not Words, but Virtue.

MANY men, and also sensible men, lose both the reputation and profit of good thoughts, by the strange manner of expressing them. They love to speak in mystery, and esteem it a sign of wisdom, not to be understood. So fond are they of being publick, that they will rather be ridiculous, than not be taken notice of. When the mind loaths

common things, that sickness discovers itself in our way of speaking also; for there must be new words, and new compositions: It is thought genteel to borrow from other tongues, where we may be better furnished in our own. One man values himself for being concise, and speaking parables; another runs himself out in words; and what he looks upon as only copious, renders him tedious and ridiculous. Others like the error very well, but cannot reach it. But take this for a rule; *Wheresoever the speech is corrupted, so is the mind.* Some are only for words antiquated, and long since out of date; others only for that which is popular, and coarse; and they are both in the wrong; for the one takes too little care, and the other too much. Some are for a rough, broken stile, as if it were a thing unmanly to please the ear; others are too nice upon the matter of number, and make it rather singing than speaking. Some affect not to be understood till the end of the period, and hardly then neither. Neither a stile that is too bold, nor too florid is good; the one wants modesty, and the other effect. Some are too stiff and formal; others take a pride in being rough; and if they chance to let fall any thing that was smooth, they will transpose and mangle it on purpose, only to maim the period, and disappoint people's expectation. These errors are generally introduced by some person that is famous for his eloquence; others follow him, and so it passes into a fashion. And we are as much out in the choice of our matter, as in that of our words.

THERE are some studies which are only matter of curiosity, and trial of skill; others of pleasure, and of use: But still there are many things worth the knowing perhaps, that were not worth the learning. It is a vast deal of time that is spent, in disputing about words, and captious disputations that work us up to an edge, and then nothing comes of it. There are some tricks of wit, like slight of hand, which amount to no more than the tying of knots only to loosen them again; and it is the very fallacy that pleases us; for

so soon as ever we know how they are done, the satisfaction is at an end. He that does not understand these sophisms, is never the worse; and he that does, is never the better. If a man tells me that I have horns, I can tell him again, that I have none, without feeling on my forehead. Bion's *Dilemma* makes all men to be sacrilegious, and yet at the same time maintains, that there is no such thing as sacrilege. *He that takes to himself (says he) what belongs to God, commits sacrilege; but all things belong to God, therefore he that applies any thing to his own use is sacrilegious.* On the other side, the very rifling of a temple he makes to be no sacrilege: *For it is (says he) but the taking of something out of one place that belongs to God, and removing it to another that belongs to him too.* The fallacy lies in this, that though all things belong to him, all things are not yet dedicated to him. There is no greater enemy of truth, than over much subtilty of speculation. Protagoras will have every thing disputable, and as much to be said for the one side, as for the other. Nay, he makes it another question, *Whether every thing be disputable or no?* There are others, that make it a science to prove, that man knows nothing: But the former is the more tolerable error; for the other takes away the very hope of knowledge; and it is better to know that which is superfluous, than nothing at all. And yet it is a kind of intemperance to desire to know more than enough; for it makes men troublesome, talkative, impertinent, conceited, &c. There is a certain hankering after learning; which if it be not put in a right way, prevents, and falls foul upon itself. Wherefore the burden must be fitted to the shoulders, and no more than we are able to bear. It is in a great measure, the fault of our tutors, that teach their disciples rather how to dispute, than how to live; and the learner himself is also to blame, for applying himself to the improvement, rather of his wit, than of his mind: By which means philosophy is now turned to philology. Put a grammarian to Virgil; he never heeds the philosophy, but the verse: Every man takes notes for his own

study. In the same meadow the cow finds grass, the dog starts a hare, and the stork snaps a lizard. Tully's *De Republica* finds work both for the philosopher, the philologer, and the grammarian. The philosopher wonders how it was possible to speak so much against Justice. The philologer makes this observation, that Rome had two kings: the one without a father, and the other without a mother; for it is a question, who was Servius's mother, and of Ancus's father there is not the least mention. The grammarian takes notice, that *reapse* is used for *reipsa*; and *seipse* for *seipse*. And so every man makes his notes for his own purpose. These fooleries apart, let us learn to do good to mankind, and to put our knowledge into action. Our danger is the being mistaken in things, not in words; and in the confounding of good and evil. So that our whole life is but one continued error, and we live in dependence upon to-morrow. There are a world of things to be studied and learned, and therefore we should discharge the mind of things unnecessary, to make way for greater matters. The business of the school is rather a play, than a study, and only to be done when one can do nothing else. There are many people that frequent them, only to hear, and not to learn; and they take notes too, not to reform their manners, but to pick up words; which they vent, with as little benefit to others, as they heard them to themselves. It costs us a great deal of time, and other men's ears a great deal of trouble, to purchase the character of a learned man; wherefore I shall just satisfy myself with the coarser title of an honest man. The worst of it is, that there is a vain and idle pleasure in it, which tempts us to squander away many a precious hour to little purpose. We spend ourselves upon subtilties, which may perhaps make us to be thought learned, but not good. Wisdom delights in openness and simplicity; in the forming of our lives, rather than in the niceties of the schools, which, at best, do but bring us pleasure without profit. And in short, the thing which the philosophers impose upon us with so much pride, and

vanity, are little more than the same lessons over again, which they were taught at school. But some authors have their names up, though their discourses be mean enough; they dispute, and wrangle, but they do not edify, any farther, than as they keep us from doing ill, or perhaps stop us in our speed to wickedness. And there ought to be a difference betwixt the applauses of the schools, and of the theatre; the one being moved with every popular conceit, which does not at all consist with the dignity of the other. Whereas there are some writings that do stir up some generous resolutions, and do, as it were, inspire a man with a new soul. They display the blessings of a happy life, and possess me at the same time with admiration, and with hope. They give me a veneration for the oracles of antiquity, and a claim to them, as to a common inheritance; for they are the riches of mankind, and it must be my duty to improve the stock, and transmit it to posterity. And yet I do not love to hear a man cite Zeno, Cleanthes, Epicurus, without something of his own too. What do I care for the bare hearing of that which I may read? Not but that word of mouth makes a great impression, especially when they are the speaker's own words: But he that only recites another person's words, is no more to me than a notary. Beside that, there is an end of invention, if we rest upon what is invented already; and he that only follows another, is so far from finding out any thing new, that he does not so much as look for it. I do not pretend to be master of truth all this time, but I am a steady enquirer after it. I ascribe much to great men, tho' I am no man's slave, and I challenge something to myself. Our forefathers have left us matter for great inquiry, and they probably might have found out more necessary things, had they not employed their thoughts too much upon superfluities.

Is it not ridiculous for us to be trifling about words, when we have many necessary things to learn and imprint in our

minds? It is not sufficient to understand, except we practise what we know.



E P I S T L E IV.

Business and want of News, are no excuse for not Writing among Friends. Wise Men are the better for each other. How far Wisdom may be advanced by Precept.

YOU made your last letter a very short one, and the contents of it was little more than an excuse for the shortness of it. One while you are so much taken up with *business*, that you cannot write; and another while you have so little *news*, that you cannot find subject. But whoever chuses to write, may find time for it; and the other pretence appears as if we were the least part of our own business. Though the case were, that the whole world were becalmed, and that there was neither wars, factions, amours, designs, disappointments, prodigals, usurers, fornicators, competitors, or law-suits; still their would be a large field open for the offices of friendship, and the exercise of philosophy and virtue. Let us not attend to other people's affairs, but consider what we should do ourselves. What signifies the story of our neighbour's errors, to the reforming of our own? Is it not a more honourable and profitable employment, to write the history of *Providence*, than to record the usurpation of *ambitious princes*; and rather to celebrate the bounties of the Almighty, than the robberies of Alexander? Nor is business any excuse, for the neglect, either of our studies, or of our friends. First, we continue our own business, and then we increase it: And instead of lending, we do entirely give ourselves up to it, and hunt for colourable pretences of mis-spending our time. But I say, that wherever we are,

or with whomsoever, or howsoever employed, we have our thoughts free.

You have here drawn a long letter from me; and if you find it tedious, you may thank yourself, for re-minding me to be as good as my promise. Not but that I write by inclination too. For if we love the pictures of our friends, by what hand soever they be drawn, how much more then shall we have pleasure in a friend's letters, which are undoubtedly the most lively pictures of one another? It is a shame, you will say, to stand in need of any remembrancers of an absent friend; and yet sometimes the place, a servant, a relation, a house, a garment, may honestly excite the memory; and it renders every thing as fresh to us, as if we were still joined in our embraces, and drinking up one another's tears. It is by the benefit of letters, that absent friends are in a manner brought together; beside that, *epistolary discourses* are much more profitable than publick, and premeditated declamations. For they insinuate themselves into the affections with more freedom, and effect, though with less pomp and pretence. You expect, perhaps, that I should tell you how gentle and short a winter we have had; how cold and unseasonable a spring, or some other trifles, to as little purpose. But, what are you and I the better for such conversations? We should rather be laying the foundations of a good mind; and learning to distinguish betwixt the blessings of virtue and the amusements of imagination. There came in some friends to me yesterday, that made the chimney smook a little more than common; but not at a rate to make the neighbourhood cry out *Fire*. We had variety of conversation; and passing from one thing to another, we came at last to read something of Quintus Sextius: (A great man, upon my credit, deny it that will,) Good God! the force and vigour of that man's writings! and how much are they above the common level of other philosophers! I cannot read them, methinks, without challenging of fortune, and defying all the powers of ambition and violence. The more I think of him,

the more I admire him; for I find him, (as in the world itself) *every day* to be a *new spectacle*, and to afford fresh matter still for more veneration. And yet the wisdom of our ancestors has left work enough for their posterity; even if there were no more in it than the application of what they have transmitted to us of their own invention. As, suppose, that they had left us remedies for such and such diseases, so certain, that we should not have occasion to look for any other medicines; there would be some skill yet required in the applying of them in the proper case, proportion, and season. I have an honour for the memorials of our worthy progenitors. If I meet a consul, or a prætor upon the road, I will alight from my horse, uncover my head, and give him the way; and shall I have no veneration now for the names of the governors of mankind? No man is so wise as to know every thing; or if he did, one wise man may yet assist another, in finding out a nearer way to the finishing of his work: For, let a man make never so much haste, it is some sort of assistance, the bare encouraging of him to continue his course; beside the comforts, and benefits in communication, in loving, and being beloved, and in the mutual approbation of each other.

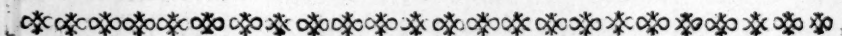
THE last point, you know, that you and I had in debate, was, *Whether or no wisdom may be perfected by precept?* There are some that account only that part of *philosophy* to be profitable to mankind, which delivers itself in particular precepts to particular persons, without forming the whole man: Teaching the husband (for the purpose) how to behave himself to his wife; the father how to train up, and discipline his children; and the master how to govern his servants. As if any man could be sufficiently instructed in the parts of life, without comprehending the whole sum and scope of it. Others (as Aristo the Stoick) are rather for the general decrees of philosophers; which whosoever knows in the main, that person understands in ever particular how to tutor himself. As he that learns to cast a dart, when he has by practice,

and exercise, gotten a true aim, he not only will strike this, or that mark, but whatever he has a mind to: So he that is well informed in the whole, will need no direction in the parts, but under the principles of a good life, learn how to behave himself in all the circumstances of it. Cleanthes allows the *parænetick*, or *preceptive philosophy*, to be in some manner profitable; but yet very short, and defective, unless as it flows from the universal understanding of the heads, and decrees of *philosophy*. Now the question is, whether this alone can make a good man, and whether it be superfluous itself; or so sufficient, as to make all knowledge appear so? They that will have it superfluous, argue thus. If the eyes be covered, there is no seeing without removing the impediment; and in that condition it is in vain to desire a man to go to such, or such a place, or to reach this or that with his hand. And so it fares with the mind; so long as that remains clouded with ignorance and error, it is idle to give particular precepts; as if you should teach a poor man to act the part of a rich, or one that is hungry, how to behave himself with a full stomach: While the one is necessitous, and the other half starved, they are neither of them the better for it. And then, shall we give precepts in *manifest cases*, or in *doubtful*? The former need none, and in the latter we shall not be believed. Nor is it sufficient simply to advise, unless we also give reasons for it. There are two errors which we are liable to in this case; either the wickedness of perverse opinions, which have taken possession of us; or at least a disposition to entertain error, under any resemblance of truth. So that our work must be, either to cure a sick mind, that is already tainted; or to prepossess an evil inclination, before it comes to a bad habit. Now, the decrees of *philosophy* enable us in both these cases: Nor is it possible, by particulars, to obviate all particular occasions. One man marries a widow, another a maid: She may be rich, or poor; barren, or fruitful; young, or ancient; superior, inferior, or equal. One man follows publick business, another avoids it; so that the

same advice that is profitable to the one, may be hurtful to the other. Every one's is a particular case, and must be suited with a particular advice. The laws of *philosophy* are brief, and extend to all; but the variety of the other is incomprehensible, and can never make that good to all which it promises to a few. The precepts of wisdom lie open, but the degrees of it are concealed.

Now, in answer, it does not hold, with the mind, as with the eye: If there be a suffusion, it is to be helped by remedy, and not by precept. The eye is not to be taught to distinguish colours; but the mind must be informed what to do in life. And yet the physician will prescribe order to the patient, as well as physick; and tell him, *You must bring your eye to endure the light by degrees; avoid studying upon a full stomach, &c.* We are told that precepts do neither extinguish nor abate false opinions in us, of good, or evil: And it shall be granted, that of themselves they are not able to subdue vicious inclinations: but this does not prevent them from being very useful to us in conjunction with other assistances. First, as they refresh the memory; and secondly, as they bring us to a more distinct view of the parts, which we saw but confusedly in the whole. At the same rate, consolatories, and extortions will be found superfluous, as well as precepts, which yet upon daily experience we know to be otherwise. Nay, we are the better, not only for the precepts, but for the conversation of *philosophers*; for we still carry away somewhat of the tincture of virtue, whether we will or no: But the deepest impression they make, is upon children. It is urged that precepts are insufficient without proof; but, I say, that the very authority of the adviser goes a great way in the credit of the advice: As we depend upon the opinion of the lawyer, without asking his reason for it. And again, whereas the variety of examples is said to be numerous, I cannot allow it. Affairs of the greatest consequence are not many; and as to application to people, place, or time, the difference is so trifling, that a few general rules

will be sufficient. And let a man be ever so right in his opinion, he may be more confirmed in it by good advice. There are many things which may be serviceable in assisting a cure, though they do not perfect it: Even mad men may be kept in awe, by threatning and correction: But I must own, it is a difficult matter to give advice at a distance. The use of advice depends greatly upon the proper time it is given; that which would have been acceptable when desired, may be hurtful before it is received. Some remedies may be useful at a distance, and others are in no use but upon the spot.



E P I S T L E V.

Seneca gives an Account of himself: Of his Inclinations and Studies: With many very good Reflections upon the Duties and Errors of human Life.

BEFORE your *letters* came to my hand, they were old, so I did not enquire of the messenger what you were employed in; and I take it for granted, that I know your business, wherever you are; and that you are still employed in the great business of perfecting yourself: A thing not to be done by chance, but by industry. We are all wicked before we arrive at goodness. We must throw aside iniquity, and study virtue. To begin, is the great difficulty; new experiments are disagreeable to a weak mind. I do not now concern myself about your well-doing; I do not fear it, as the love of goodness and truth is become habitual to you. It may so happen that fortune probably may do you a hurt; but there is no fear of your doing yourself one. Go on as you have begun, and compose your resolutions; not to an effeminate ease, but to a frame of virtuous quiet. It is a double kindness that you call me to so strict an account of my time;

that nothing less than a journal of my life will content you: For I take it as a sign both of your good opinion, and of your friendship; the former, in believing that I do nothing which I care to conceal; and the other, in assuring yourself that I will make you the confident of all my secrets. I will hereafter set a watch on myself, and do as you would have me: and acquaint you not only with the course and method, but with the very business of my life.

THIS day I have had quite to myself, without any knocking at my door, or lifting up of the hanging; but I have divided it betwixt my book and my bed, and been left at liberty to do my own business: For all the impertinents were either at the theatre, at bowls, or at the horsematch. My body does not require much exercise; and I am beholden to my age for it: A little makes me tired; and that is the end also of that which is most robust. My dinner is a piece of dry bread, without a table, and without dirtying my fingers. My sleeps are short, and really a little doubtful, betwixt slumbering and waking. One while I am reflecting on the errors of antiquity; and then, I apply myself to the correcting of my own. In my reading, with reverence to the ancients, some things I take, others I alter; and some again I reject; others I invent; without enthralling myself so to another's judgment, as not to preserve the freedom of my own. Sometimes of a sudden in the middle of my meditations, my ears are struck with a thousand people together, from some spectacle or other; the noise does not at all take off my attention, it is no more to me than the dashing of waves, or the wind in a wood; but possibly sometimes it may divert them. *Good God, think I, if men would but exercise their brains, as they do their bodies; and be at as much trouble for virtue, as they are for pleasure!* For difficulties strengthen the mind as well as labour does the body.

You tell me, that you want my books more than my advice; which I take just as kindly, as if you had asked me for my picture. For I have the very same opinion of my wit,

that I have of my beauty. You shall have both the one, and the other, with my very self into the bargain.

IN the examination of my own heart, I find some vices that lie open; others more obscure, and out of sight; and some that take me only at times. Which last I look upon as the most dangerous and troublesome; for they lie upon the catch, and keep a man upon a constant guard: Being neither provided against them, as in a state of war; nor secure, as in any assurance of peace. To say the truth, we are all of us as cruel, as ambitious, and as luxurious as our neighbours. But we want the fortune, or the occasion, probably, to shew it. When the snake is frozen, it is safe; but the poison is still in it, though it be numbed. We hate upstarts, that use their power with insolence; when yet if we had the same means, it is odds we should do the same thing ourselves. Only our corruptions are private, for want of opportunity to employ them. Some things we look upon as superfluous; and others as immaterial. But we never consider, that we pay dearest for that which we pretend to receive *gratis*. As anxiety, loss of credit, liberty, and time. So cheap is every man in effect, that pretends to be most dear to himself. Some are dipt in their lusts, as in a river; there must be a hand to help them out: others are strangely careless of good advice. Some again must be forced to their duties, because there is no good to be done upon them by persuasion. But out of the whole race of mankind, how few are there that are able to assist themselves? Being thus conscious of our own frailty, we should do well to keep ourselves quiet; and not to trust weak minds with wine, beauty, or pleasures: We have much ado, you see, to keep our feet on dry ground: What will become of us then, if we venture ourselves where it is slippery? It is not to say, *This is a hard lesson, and we cannot go through with it*. For we *can*, if we would *endeavour it*; but we *cannot*, because we give it for granted that we *cannot*, without trying whether we *can* or *not*. And what is the meaning of all this; but that we are pleased with our vices, and wil-

ling to be mastered by them? So that we had rather excuse than cast them off. The true reason is, we *will not*; but the pretence is that we *cannot*. And we are not only under a *necessity* of error, but the very *love* of it.

To give you now a brief of my own character, I am none of those that take pleasure in tumults, and in struggling with difficulties. I had rather be quiet, than in arms: For I account it my duty to bear up against bad fortune; but still without chusing it. I am no friend to contention; especially to that of the bar: But I am very much a servant to all businesses, that may be done in a corner. And there is no retreat so unhappy, as not to yield entertainment for a great mind; by which a man may make himself profitable both to his country, and to his friends, by his wisdom, by his interest, and by his counsel. It is the part of a good patriot to prefer men of worth; to defend the innocent; to provide good laws; and to advise in war and in peace. But, is not he as good a patriot, that instructs youth in virtue; that furnishes the world with precepts of morality, and keeps human nature within the bounds of right reason? Who is the greater man, he that pronounces a sentence upon the bench, or he that in his study reads us a lecture of justice, piety, patience, fortitude; the knowledge of heaven, the contempt of death, and the blessing of a good conscience? The soldier that guards the ammunition and the baggage, is as necessary as he that fights the battle. Was not Cato a greater example than either Ulysses or Hercules? They had the honour, you know, of being indefatigable; despisers of pleasure, and great conquerors, both of their enemies, and of their appetites. But Cato, I must own, had no encounters with monsters; nor did he fall into those times of credulity, when people believed, that the weight of the heavens rested upon one man's shoulders. But he grappled with ambition, and the unbounded desire of power; which the whole world, divided under a *triumvirate*, was not able to satisfy. He opposed himself to the vices of a degenerate city; even when it was now sinking under its own weight.

He stood alone, and supported the falling commonwealth; till at length, as inseparable friends, they were crushed together; for neither would Cato survive the publick liberty; nor did that liberty out-live Cato. To give you a further account of myself: I am naturally a friend to all the rules and methods of sobriety and moderation. I like the old-fashioned plate that was left me by my country father: It is plain and heavy; and yet for all this, there is a kind of dazzling, methinks, in the ostentations of splendor and luxury. But it strikes the eye more than the mind; and though it may shake a wise man, it cannot alter him. Yet it sends me home many times more sorrowful, than I went out; but yet I hope, not worse; tho' not without some secret discontent at my own situation. Upon these thoughts I betake myself to my *philosophy*; and then, methinks, I am not well, unless I put myself into some publick employment. Not for the honour, or the profit of it; but only to place myself in a situation where I may be useful to my country, and to my friends. But when I come, on the other side, to consider the uneasiness, the abuses, and the loss of time that attends publick affairs, I get home again as fast as I can; and determine to spend the remainder of my life within the privacy of my own walls. How great a madness is it to set our hearts upon trifles; especially to the neglect of the most serious offices of our lives, and the most important end of our being? How miserable, as well as short is their life, that compass with great labour, what they possess with greater; and hold with anxiety, what they acquire with trouble? But, we are governed in all things by opinion, and every thing is to us as we believe it. What is *poverty*, but a *privative*; and not intended of what a man *has*, but of that which he has *not*? The great subject of human calamities, is *money*. Take all the rest together, as death, sickness, fear, desire, pain, labour; and those which proceed from *money* exceed them all. It is a great folly, that of tumblers, rope-dancers, divers; what trouble they take, and what hazard they run, for a

trifling gain! And yet we have not patience for the hundred part of that trouble, though it would put us into the possession of an everlasting quiet. Epicurus, for experiment sake, confined himself to a narrower allowance, than that of the severest prisons to the most capital offenders; and found himself at ease too in a stricter diet, than a man in the worst condition needs to fear. This was to frustrate the worst that fortune could do. We would not discover any thing to be superfluous, but by the want of it. We provide many things, only because other people have them. Demetrius rejected five thousand crowns, which were offered him by Caligula, with a smile, as if he thought it so small a sum, that the refusal did him no honour. *Nothing less*, says he, *than the offer of his whole empire, would be a sufficient temptation, to the firmness of my virtue.* By this scorn of riches is meant only the fearless possession of them. And the way to obtain that is to persuade ourselves that we may live happy without them. How many things which reason told us formerly were superfluous, do we now find by experience to be so! But we are deceived on the one hand by the false appearance of good, and on the other hand by the suspicions of evil. Not that riches are really the cause of mischief; but they are a precedent cause, by way of imitation and attraction. They resemble good so nearly, that most people take them to be really good. Nay, virtue itself is also a precedent cause of evil; as many are envied for their wisdom or justice: Which does not arise from the irreprovable power of virtue that induces all men to admire, and to love it. That is not *good* which is *more advantageous* to us, but that which is *really* so.



E P I S T L E VI.

The Blessings of a virtuous Retirement. How we come to the Knowledge of Virtue. A Distinction betwixt good and honest. A wise Man is satisfied with his Condition.

NO opportunity of enquiring where you are, escapes me, what company you keep, and what you do: And I am very well satisfied that I can hear nothing about you, as it shews that you live retired. Not but I could trust you with the wide world: But it is neither safe nor easy: it might hinder you, if it did not corrupt you. Therefore know, that I am always with you, and you are to live in such a manner as if I both heard and saw you. Your letters are real blessings to me, and the knowledge of your improvement gives me ease even under the sense of my own decay. Remember I am old, and you are mortal. Be true to yourself, and examine yourself, whether you be of the same way of thinking to-day that you were yesterday; for that is a mark of true wisdom. And allow me to tell you, that though change of mind be a sign of imperfection, it is right at my age to unwill one day that which I willed another. And let me recommend it to your practice too, in many cases; for the abatement of our appetites, and of our errors, is the best entertainment of mankind. It is for young men to gather knowledge, and for old men to use it; And assure yourself that no man gives a fairer account of his time, than he that makes it his constant study, to make himself better. If you be in health, and think it worth your while to become the master of yourself; it is my desire, and my advice, that you apply yourself to wisdom with your whole heart: And judge of your improvement, not by what you speak, or by what you write; but by the steadiness of your mind, and the government of

your passions. What extremities have some men endured in sieges; even for the ambition and interest of other people! And, shall not a man venture the crossing of an intemperate lust, for the conquest of himself? You do very well to be-take yourself to a private life; and better yet, in keeping of that privacy private. For, otherwise, your retreat would look like ostentation: The greatest actions of our lives are those that we do in a recess from business: Besides, that there are some governments, and employments, that a man would not have any thing to do withal. And then it is to be considered, that publick offices, and commissions, are commonly bought without money; whereas the great blessings of time, and privacy cost us nothing. Contemplation is undoubtedly the best entertainment of peace; and only a shorter cut to heaven itself: Over and above that, business makes us troublesome to others, and unquiet to ourselves; for, the end of one appetite, or design, is the beginning of another. To say nothing of the expence of time in vexatious attendances, and the danger of competitors. Such a man, probably, has more friends at court, than I have, a larger train, a fairer estate, more profitable offices, and more illustrious titles. But, what do I care to be overcome by men, in some cases, so long as *fortune* is overcome by *me* in *all*? These considerations should have been earlier; for it is too late, in the article of death, to project the happiness of life. And yet there is no age better adapted to virtue, than that which comes by many experiments and long sufferings, to the knowledge of it: For our lusts are then weak, and our judgment strong; and wisdom is the effect of time.

SOME imagine, that we come to the knowledge of virtue by chance; (which were an indignity.) Others by observation, and comparing matters of fact with one another: The understanding, by a kind of *analogy*, approving this or that, for good and honest. These are two points, which others make wholly different; but the Stoicks only divide them. Some will have every thing to be good, that is beneficial to

us: As money, wine; and so lower, to the meanest things we use. And they reckon that to be honest, where there is a reasonable discharge of a common duty: As reverence to a parent; tenderness to a friend; the exposing of ourselves for our country, and the regulating of our lives according to moderation and prudence. The Stoicks reckon them to be two; but so as to make *these two*, yet, out of *one*. They will have nothing to be good, but what is honest; nor any thing to be honest, but that which is good: So that in some sort they are mixed, and inseparable. There are some things that are neither good, nor bad, as war, embassy, jurisdiction: But these, in the laudable administration of them, do, of doubtful, become good; which good is only a consequent upon honesty: But honesty is good in itself, and the other flows from it. There are some actions that seem to us matter of benignity, humanity, generosity, resolution; which we are apt to admire, as perfect: And yet, upon farther examination, we find, that great vices were concealed under the appearance of eminent virtues: but yet many things seem to be good, that are evil; and evil, that are good: And the skill is to distinguish betwixt things that are so much alike in shew, and so disagreeing in effect. We are led to the understanding of virtue, by the congruity we find in such and such actions to nature and right reason: By the order, grace, and constancy of them; and by a certain majesty, and greatness, that surpasses all other things. From hence proceeds a happy life; to which nothing comes amiss; but on the contrary, ever thing succeeds to our wish. There is no wrangling with fortune; no being out of temper for accidents; whatsoever befalls me in my lot, and whether in appearance it be good or bad, it is God's will; and it is my duty to bear it. When a man has once gotten a habit of virtue, all his actions are equal: He is constantly one and the same man; and he does well, not only upon counsel, but out of custom also. Shall I tell you now, in a word, the sum of human duty? *Patience*, where we are to suffer; and *prudence*, in things we do. It is a usual

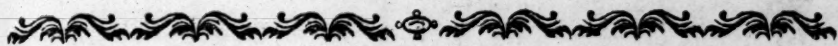
complaint in the world, that the things we enjoy are but few, transitory, and uncertain; so ungrateful a construction do we make of the divine bounty. Hence it is, that we are neither willing to die, nor contented to live; betwixt the fear of the one, and the hatred of the other. Hence it is, that we are continually shifting of counsels, and still craving of more; because that which we call felicity, is not able to fill us. And what is the reason, but that we are not yet come to that immense and insuperable good, which leaves us nothing farther to desire? In that blessed estate we feel no want; we are abundantly satisfied with what we have; and what we have not, we do not regard; so that every thing is great, because it is sufficient. If we quit this hold, there will be no place for the offices of faith and piety: In the discharge whereof we must both suffer many things, that the world calls evil; and part with many things, which are generally accounted good. True joy is everlasting; pleasures are false, and fugitive. It is a great encouragement to *well-doing* that when we are once in the possession of virtue, it is our own for ever. While I speak this to you, I prescribe to myself; what I write, I read; and reduce all my meditations to the ordering of my own manners. There is nothing so mean, and ordinary, but it is illustrated by virtue; and externals are of no more use to it, than the light of a candle to the glory of the sun.

It is often objected to me, that I advise people to leave the world, to retire, and content themselves with a good conscience. But, what becomes of your precepts then (say they) that enjoin us to die in action? To whom I must answer, "That I am never more in action, than when I am alone in my study; where I have only locked up myself in private, to attend the business of the publick. I do not lose so much as one day; nay, and part of the-night too I borrow for my book. When my eyes will serve me no longer, I fall asleep; and till then I work. I have retired myself, not only from men, but from business too; and

“ my own, in the first place, to attend the service of posterity; in hope that what I now write, may, in some measure, be profitable to future generations.”

BUT it is no new thing, I know, to calumniate virtue, and good men; for sick eyes will not endure the light; but, like *birds of night*, they fly from it into their holes. Why does such a man talk so much of his *philosophy*, and yet live splendidly? Of contemning riches, life, health; and yet cherish, and maintain them with all possible care? Banishment, he says, is an idle name; and yet he can grow old within his own walls. He puts no difference betwixt a long life and a short; and yet he spins out his own, as far as it will go. The thing is, he does not despise temporary blessings, so as to refuse, or drive them away; but if they come, they are welcome; if not, he will never break his heart for the want of them: He takes them into his house, not into his soul; and he makes use of them, only as matter for his virtue to work upon. There is no doubt but a wise man may shew himself better in riches, than in poverty: That is to say, his temperance, his liberality, his magnificence, providence and prudence will be more conspicuous. He will be a wise man still, if he should want a leg or an arm; but yet he had rather be perfect. Riches please him, as a fair wind at sea would please him, or the warm sun in a frosty morning: So that things which we call indifferent, have still their value, and some greater than others: But with this difference, betwixt philosophers and the common people; riches are the servants of the one, and the masters of the other. If they depart from the one, they carry away nothing but themselves; but from the other they take away the very heart and peace of the possessor. If I might have my choice, I would prefer health and strength; and yet if I come to be visited by pain or sickness I would endeavour to improve them to my advantage, by making a righteous judgment of them; as I ought to do of all the appointments of Providence. So that as they are not good in themselves, neither are they evil;

but matter of exercise for our virtues of temperance and resignation.



E P I S T L E VII.

*Of impertinent Studies and impertinent Men. Philosophers
the best Companions.*

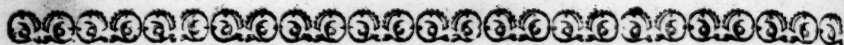
HE who considers the business of life and death duly, will find he has little time to spare from that study: And yet how we trifle our hours away upon impertinent niceties and cavils! Will I be ever the honefter for observing Plato's imaginary ideas? They are both void of certainty and substance. *A mouse is a syllable; but a syllable does not eat cheese: therefore a mouse does not eat cheese.* Oh! these childish follies! Is it for this that we spend our blood, and our good humour, and grow grey in our closets? We are a jesting, when we should be helping the miserable, as well ourselves as others. There is no sporting with men in distress. The felicity of mankind depends upon the counsel of philosophers. Let us rather consider what nature has made superfluous, and what necessary: How easy our conditions are, and how delicious that life, which is governed by reason, rather than opinion. There are impertinent studies as well as impertinent men. Didymus the grammarian wrote 4000 books; wherein he is much concerned to discover where Homer was born; who was Æneas's true mother; and whether Anacreon was the greater whoremaster or drunkard: With other fopperies, that a man would labour to forget, if he knew them. Is it not an important question, which of the two was first, the mallet, or the tongs? Some people are extremely inquisitive to know how many oars Ulysses had: Which was first written, the Iliads or the Odysseys; or if they were both done by the same hand? A man is never a jot the more

learned for this curiosity, but much the more troublesome. Am I ever the more just, the more moderate, valiant, or liberal, for knowing that Curius Dentatus was the first that carried elephants in triumph? Teach me my duty to Providence, to my neighbour, and to myself: To dispute, with Socrates; to doubt, with Carneades; to set up my rest, with Epicurus; to govern my appetites, with the Stoicks; and to renounce the world, with the Cynick. What a deal of business there is, first, to make Homer a *philosopher*; and, secondly, in what *class* to range him? One will have him to be a Stoick, a friend to virtue, and an enemy to pleasure; preferring honesty even to immortality itself: Another makes him an Epicurean; one that loves his quiet, and to spend his time in good company: Some are positive in it, that he was a Peripatetick; and others, that he was a Sceptick. But it is clear, that in being all these things, he was not any one of them. These divided opinions do not at all hinder us from agreeing upon the main, that he was a wise man. Let us therefore apply ourselves to those things that made him so, and even let the rest be as it is.

It was a pleasant humour of Calvicius Sabinus, a rich man, and one that managed a very good fortune with a very ill grace. He had neither wit, nor memory; but would fain pass for a learned man, and so took several into his family; and whatsoever they knew, he assumed to himself. There are a sort of people, that are never well but at theatres, spectacles, and publick places; men of business, but it is only in their faces; for they wander up and down without any design; like *pismires*, eager and empty; and every thing they do, is only *as it happens*. This is an humour, which a man may call a kind of restless laziness. Others you shall have, that are always in haste, as if they were crying *fire*, or running for a midwife; and all this hurry, perhaps, only to salute somebody, that had no mind to take notice of them; or some such trivial errand. At night, when they come home tired and weary, ask them why they went out? Where they have

been? And what they have done? It is a very slender account they are able to give you; and yet the next day they take the same *jaunt* over again: This is a kind of phantastical industry, a great deal of pains taken to no purpose at all: Twenty visits made, and no body at home (they themselves least of all:) They that have this vice are commonly hearkners, tale-bearers, newsmongers, medlers in other people's affairs, and curious after secrets, which a man can neither safely hear, nor report. These men of idle employment, that run up and down, continually vexing others, and themselves too; that thrust themselves into all companies; what do they get by it? One man is asleep, another at supper, a third in company, a fourth in haste, a fifth gives them the slip: and when their folly has gone the round, they close up the day with shame and repentance. Whereas Zeno, Pythagoras, Democritus, Aristotle, Theophrastus, and all the patrons of *philosophy*, and virtue; they are always at leisure, and chearful; familiar, profitable; a man never comes away empty-handed from them; but, full of comfort, and satisfaction; they make all past ages present to us; or us their contemporaries. The doors of those men are open, night and day; and in their conversation there is neither danger, treachery, nor expence; but we are the wiser, the happier, and the richer for it. How happily does a man spend his time in this company, where he may advise in all the difficulties of life! Here is counsel without reproach, and praise without flattery. We may chuse our friends, but not our parents. In this manner mortality will resemble immortality: The remembrance of time past makes it to be our own; the present, by use; and the future by providence and foresight. That only may properly be said to be the long life, that draws all ages into one; and that a short one, that forgets the past, neglects the present, and is solicitous for the future. But it is of no effect to know what Plato or Zeno said, unless we make it all our own by *habit* and *practice*, and improve both the world, and ourselves,

by an example of life answerable to the precept they have left us.



E P I S T L E VIII.

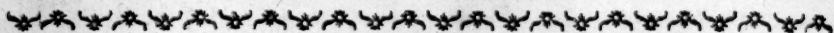
Against Singularity of Manners and Behaviour.

MANY people are of such a temper, that they chuse to be particular in their dress and manner, for no other reason, but to be taken notice of. Some like to wear coarse cloaths, and dress themselves in a slovenly manner; neglect their head and beard, sleep upon the ground, and openly defy the want of money. And what occasions this, but vanity? A wise man will keep himself free of all these fooleries, without being particular. But do you imagine this will secure him? I cannot assure him of it, more than I can promise health to a temperate man, though the probability is great. A *philosopher* has enough to do to stand right in the world, let him be never so modest: And his outside shall be still like that of other people, let them be never so unlike *within*. His garments shall be neither rich nor sordid. No matter for arms, motto's, and other curiosities upon his plate: But he shall not yet make it a matter of conscience to have no plate at all. He that likes an earthen vessel as well as silver, has not a greater mind than he that uses plate, and esteems it as dirt. It is our duty to live better than the common people, but not in opposition to them; as if *philosophy* were a faction; for by so doing, instead of reforming and gaining upon them, we drive them away; and when they find it unreasonable to imitate us in all things, they will imitate us in nothing. Our business must be to live according to *nature*, and to own the sense of outward things with other people: Not to torment the body; and, with exclamations against that which is sweet and cleanly, to delight in

have dirtiness; and to use, not only a coarse, but a slovenly and offensive diet. Wisdom preaches temperance, not mortification; and a man may be a very good husband, without being a sloven. He that steers a middle course, betwixt virtue and popularity; that is to say, betwixt good manners and discretion, shall gain both approbation and reverence. But, what if a man governs himself in his cloaths, in his diet, in his exercises as he ought to do? It is not that his garments, his meat, and drink, or his walking, are things simply good; but it is the tenor of a man's life; and the conformity of it to nature, and right reason. *Philosophy* obliges us to humanity, society, and the ordinary use of external things. It is not a thing to pleasure the people with, or to amuse an idle hour; but a study for the forming the mind, and the guidance of human life. And a wise man should also live as he confesses, and in all cases be like himself, and in the first place, set a value upon himself, before he can pretend to become valuable to others. As well our good deeds, as our evil, come home to us at last; he that is charitable, makes others so by his example, and finds the comfort of that charity when he wants it himself. He that is cruel, seldom finds mercy. It is a hard matter for a man to be both popular, and virtuous; for he must be like the people that would oblige them: And the kindness of dishonest men is not to be acquired by honest means. He lives by reason, not by custom; he shuns the very discourse of the intemperate, and ambitious. He knows the danger of great examples of wickedness, and that publick errors impose upon the world, under the authority of precedents; for they take for granted, that they are never out of the way, so long as they keep the road.

As we are liable to dangers, a wise man should always have his virtue ready to encounter them; whether loss of friends, sickness, pain, poverty, he still is firm. Every thing surprizes a fool; he either makes no resistance, or very little; he will neither be advised by others, nor be attentive to himself: He thinks philosophy not worth his while, and is satisf-

fied if he can but be esteemed a good man amongst the common people.



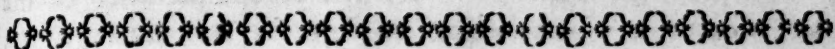
E P I S T L E IX.

The Blessings of a strong Mind in a weak Body; with some of Seneca's pertinent Reflections upon his own Age.

I NEED say nothing of Claranus's age, when I tell you he was my school-fellow. You would not imagine how youthful and strong his mind is, and the continual conflict that it has with his body. They were not well matched, except to shew that generosity may be concealed under any shape. He has surmounted all difficulties, and from the contempt of himself, is advanced to the contempt of every thing else. When I take a narrow view of him, his body appears as firm to me as his mind. If nature could have brought the soul naked into the world, perhaps she would have done it: But yet she does a greater thing, in exalting that soul above every impediment of the flesh. It is a great happiness, to preserve the force of the mind, in the decay of the body; and to see the loss of appetite more than requited with the love of virtue. But whether I owe this comfort to my *age*, or to *wisdom*, is the question. And whether, if I could any longer, I would not still do the same things over again, which I ought not to do. If age had no other pleasure than this, that it neither cares for any thing, nor stands in need of any thing; it were a great one to me, to have left all my painful and troublesome lusts behind me. But, *It is uneasy*, you will say, *to be always afraid of death*. As if that apprehension did not concern a young man as well as an old; or that death only called us, according to our years. I am however beholden to my old age, that has now confined me to my bed; and put me out of condition of *doing* those things any

longer, which I should *not* do. The less my mind has to do with my body, the better. And if age puts an end to my desires, and does the business of virtue, there can be no reason for complaint; nor can there be any gentler end, than to melt away in a sort of dissolution. Where fire meets with opposition, and matter to work upon, it is furious, and rages; but where it finds no fuel, as in old age, it goes out quietly, for want of nourishment. Nor is the body the settled habitation of the mind; but a temporary lodging, which we are to leave whensoever the master of the house pleases. Neither does the soul, when it has left the body, any longer care what becomes of the carcase, and the several parts of it, than a man does for the shavings of his beard under the hand of the *barber*. There is not any thing that exposes a man to more vexation, and reproach, than too much love of the body: For sense neither looks forward, nor backward, but only upon the present: Nor does it judge of good, or evil; or foresee consequences, which give a connection to the order and series of things, and to the unity of life. Not but that every man has naturally a love for his own body, as poor people love even their own beggarly cottages; they are old acquaintances, and loth to part: And I am not against the indulging of it neither; provided that I make not myself a slave to it; for he that serves it, has many masters. Beside that, we are in constant disorder: One while with gripes, pains in the head, tooth-ach, gout, stone, defluctions; some time with *too much* blood, other while with *too little*: And yet this frail and putrid body of ours, values itself as if it were immortal. We put no bounds to our hopes, our avarice, our ambition. The same man is Vatinus to-day, and Cato to-morrow: This hour as luxurious as Apicius, and the next as temperate as Tuberio: Now, for a mistress; then for a wife: Imperious this hour; servile the next: Thrifty, and prodigal; laborious, and voluptuous by turns. But still the goods, or the ills of the body, do but concern the body (which is peevish, sour, and anxious) without any effect upon a well-composed mind.

I was the other day at my villa, and complaining of my charge of repairs: My bailiff told me, *It was not his fault; for the house was old, and he had much ado to keep it from falling down.* (Well, thought I) *And what am I myself then, that saw the laying of the first stone?* In the gardens, I found the trees as much out of order, the boughs knotted and withered, and their bodies over-run with moss. *This would not have been* (said I) *if you had trenched them, and watered them, as you should have done.* By my soul, master (says the poor fellow) *I have done what I could: But, alas! they are all do-tards, and spent.* What am I then (thought I to myself) *that planted all these trees with my own hands?* And then I come to recollect that age itself is not yet without its pleasures, if we did but know how to use them; and that the best morsel is reserved for the last: Or at worst, it is equivalent to the enjoying of pleasures, not to stand in need of any. I think it was but yesterday that I went to school. But time goes faster with an old man, than with a young: Perhaps because he reckons more upon it. There is hardly any man so old, but he may hope for one day more yet; and the longest life is but a multiplication of days, of hours, nay, of moments. Our fate is set, and the first breath we draw is but the first step towards the last. Causes depend upon each other, and both public and private affairs are only a long connection of providential appointments. Our lives all vary, but they tend to the same issue. Nature may use her own bodies as she will, but a good man has this comfort, that nothing he can call his own will perish with him. What *must* be *shall* be; it is disagreeable to be forced to do any thing, but an easy compliance makes every thing agreeable.



E P I S T L E X.

*Custom is a great Affair. We should check our Passions in time.
Involuntary Motions are invincible.*

CUSTOM makes every thing easy to us. Some men never laugh; others abstain entirely from women, wine, and almost sleep. We lose the use of our legs by using a coach much; so must be infirm to be fashionable. Some are so plunged in pleasures, that they cannot be happy without them, which makes them miserable. That which was superfluous at first, is necessary now; but their unhappiness appears to be incurable, when sensuality has laid hold of the judgment, and wickedness is become habitual. Nay, some there are, that both hate, and persecute virtue; and that is the last act of desperation. It is much easier to check our passions in the beginning, than to stop them in their course: For, if reason could not prevent us at first, they will go on in despite of us. The Stoicks will not suffer a wise man to have any passions at all. The Peripateticks temper them; but that mediocrity is altogether false, and unprofitable. And it is all one, as if they said, that we may be a *little mad*, or a *little sick*. If we give any sort of allowance to sorrow, fear, desires, perturbations, it will not be in our power to restrain them. They are fed from abroad, and will increase with their causes. And if we yield never so little to them, the least disorder works upon the whole body. It is not my purpose all this while, wholly to take away any thing, that is either necessary, beneficial, or delightful to human life; but, to take that away, which may be vicious in it. When I forbid you to desire any thing, I am yet content, that you may be willing to have it. So that I allow you the same things: And those very pleasures will have a better relish too, when they

are enjoyed with anxiety; and when you come to command those appetites, which before you served. It is natural, you will say, to weep for the loss of a friend; to be moved at the sense of a good, or ill report, and to be melancholy in adversity. All this I grant you; and there is no vice, but something may be said for it. At first, it is tractable and modest; but if we give it entrance, we shall hardly get it out again. As it goes on, it gathers strength, and becomes quickly ungovernable. It cannot be denied, but that all affections flow from a kind of natural principle; and that it is our duty to take care of ourselves; but it is then our duty also, not to be over indulgent. Nature has mingled pleasures, even with things most necessary; not that we should value them for our own sakes, but to make those things which we cannot live without, to be more acceptable to us. If we esteem the pleasure for itself, it turns to luxury; it is not the business of nature to raise hunger, or thirst, but to extinguish them.

As there are some natural frailties, that by care, and industry, may be subdued; so there are others, that are invincible: As for a man that values not his own blood, to faint at the sight of another man's. Involuntary motions are insuperable, and inevitable; as the staring of the hair at ill news; blushing at a scurrilous discourse; swimming of the head upon the sight of a precipice, &c. Who can read the story of Clodius's expelling Cicero, and Anthony's killing of him, the cruelties of Marius, and the proscriptions of Sylla, without being affected at it? The sound of a trumpet, the picture of any thing that is horrid, the spectacle of an execution, strikes the mind, and works upon the imagination. Some people are very subject to sweat, to tremble, to stammer; their very teeth will chatter in their heads, and their lips quiver; and especially in publick assemblies. These are natural infirmities; and it is not all the resolution in the world, that can ever master them. Some redden when they are angry; of this kind was Sylla, and when the blood flush

ed into his face, you might be sure he had malice in his heart. Pompey, on the other side, (that hardly ever spake in public without a blush) had a wonderful sweetness of nature; and it did exceedingly well with him. Your *comedians* will represent fear, sadness, anger, and the like; but when they come to a bashful modesty, though they will give you humbleness of looks, softness of speech, and downcast eyes, to the very life, yet they can never come to express a blush; for it is a thing neither to be commanded, nor hindered; but it comes and goes of its own accord. The course of nature is smooth, and easy; but when we come to cross it, we strive against the stream. It is not for one man to act another man's part. For nature will quickly return, and take off the mask. There is a kind of sacred instinct that moves us. Even the worst have a sense of virtue. We are not so much ignorant, as careless. Whence comes it, that grazing beasts distinguish wholesome plants from deadly? A chicken is afraid of a kite, and not of a goose, or a peacock, which is much bigger: a bird, of a cat, and not of a dog. This is impulse, and not experiment. The cells of bees, and the webs of spiders, are not to be imitated by art, but it is nature that teaches them. The stage-player has his gestures and actions in readiness; but this is only an improvement by art, of what nature teaches them; who is never at a loss for the use of herself. We are born with this knowledge; and we have it by a natural institution; which is no other, than a natural *logick*. We brought the seeds of wisdom itself. There is the goodness of God, and that of man; the one is immortal, the other mortal; the one is perfected by nature, the other by study.



E P I S T L E XI.

We are divided in ourselves, and confound good and evil.

THAT men are commonly unsatisfied with the world, is not to be wondered at; since there is not one man of a thousand that agrees with himself; and that is the occasion of all our misery; only we are pleased to charge our own vices upon the ill-nature of fortune. We are either puffed up with pride, racked with desires, dissolved in pleasures, or blasted with cares; and what compleats our wretchedness, we are never alone, but in perpetual conflict with our lusts. Every accident startles us: we are frightened at our very shadows. Lucretius says, *that we are as much afraid in the light, as children in the dark; but I say, that we are altogether in darkness, without any light at all, and we run on blindfold, without so much as groping our way; which rashness in the dark, is the worst sort of madness.* He that is in his way, is in hope of coming to his journey's end; but error is endless. Let every man therefore examine his desires, whether they be according to rectified nature or not. That man's mind can never be right, whose actions disagree. We must not live by chance; for there can be no virtue without deliberation and election. And, where we cannot be certain, let us follow that which is most hopeful, and probable. Faith, justice, piety, fortitude, prudence, are venerable, and the possessions only of good men; but a plentiful estate, a brawny arm, and a firm body, are frequently the portion of the wicked. The perfection of human nature, is that state, which supports itself, and so is out of the fear of falling. It is a great weakness for a man to value himself upon any thing, wherein he shall be outdone by fools, and beasts. We are to consider health, strength, beauty, and such like

advantages, only as adventitious comforts: we may preserve them with care, provided that we be always ready to quit them without trouble. There is a pleasure in wickedness, as well as in virtue, and there are some people that take a glory in it too; wherefore our ancestors prescribed us the best life, and not the most plentiful; and allowed us pleasure for a companion, but not for a guide. We do frequently take the instruments of happiness for the happiness itself; and rest upon those matters, that are but in the way to it. That man only lives composed, who thinks of every thing that may happen before he feels it. But this is not yet to advise, either neglect, or indifference; for I would avoid any thing that may hurt me, where I may honorably do it. But yet I would consider the worst of things before-hand. Examine the hope, and the fear; and where things are uncertain, favour yourself, and believe that which you had rather should come to pass. There are not many men that know their own minds, but in the very instant of willing any thing. We are for one thing to-day, another thing to-morrow; so that we live and die, without coming to any resolution: still seeking that elsewhere, which we may give ourselves; that is to say, a good mind. And, in truth, we do persuade ourselves, that in several cases we do desire the thing, which effectually we do not desire. And all this, for want of laying down some certain principles, to make judgment inflexible and steady. When we do an evil, it is either for fear of great evil, or in hope of such a good, as may more than balance that evil. So that we are here distracted betwixt the duty of finishing our purpose, and the fear of mischief and danger. This infirmity must be discharged. In the pursuit of pleasures, we should consider, that there are not only sensual, but sad pleasures also, which transport the mind with adoration, (though they do not tickle the senses) give us a veneration for those virtues that exercise themselves in sweat and blood. All true goods hold an affinity and friendship one with another; and they are equal; but

false ones have in them much of vanity; they are large and specious to the eye; but upon examination, they want weight. Now, though virtues are all alike, they may yet be distinguished into desirable, and admirable; virtues of patience, and of pleasure: but, in the matter of common accidents, there is nothing which is truly worthy either of our joy, or of our fear. For reason is immoveable; does not serve but command our senses. What is pleasure, but a low and brutish thing? Glory is vain, and volatile; poverty only hard to him that does not resist it; superstition is a frantick error, that fears where it should love; and rudely invades where it should reverentially worship. Death itself is no evil at all, but the common benefit and right of nature. There is a great difference betwixt those things which are good in common opinion, and those which are so in reality: the former have the name of good things, but not the property: they may befall us, but they do not stick by us: and they may be taken away without either pain to us, or diminution. We may use them, but not trust in them; for, they are only deposited; and, they must, and will forsake us. The only treasure is that, which fortune has no power over: and the greater it is, the less envy it carries with it. Let our vices die before us, and let us discharge ourselves of our dear-bought pleasures, that hurt us, as well past, as to come; for they are followed with repentance, as well as our sins. There is neither substance in them, nor truth; for a man can never be tired of truth; but there is a satiety in error. The former is always the same, but the latter is various; and if a man looks near it, he may see through it. Besides that, the possessions of a wise man are maintained with ease. He has no need of ambassadors, armies, and castles; but like God himself, he does his business without either noise or tumult. Nay, there is something so venerable, and sacred in virtue, that if we do but meet with any thing which resembles it, the very counterfeit pleases us. By the help of *philosophy* the soul gives the slip to the body, and refreshes itself in hea-

ven. Pleasures, at best, are short-lived; but the delights of virtue are secure and perpetual. Only we must watch, labour, and attend it ourselves. For it is a business not to be done by a deputy. Nor is it properly a virtue to be a little better than the worst. Will any man boast of his eyes because they tell him that the sun shines? Neither is he presently a good man, that thinks ill of the bad. For wicked men do that also; and it is perhaps the greatest punishment of sin, the displeasure that it gives to the author of it. The saddest case of all this is, when we become enamoured of our ruin, and make wickedness our study; when vice has got a reputation; and when the dissolute have lost the only good thing they had in their excesses, the shame of offending. And yet the lewdest part of our corruptions is in private; which, if any body had looked on, we should never have committed. Therefore let us bear the *idea* of some great person for whom we have a very great respect, in our minds, and his authority will consecrate the very secret of our souls; and not only make us mend our manners, but in time render us good examples to others, and venerable to ourselves. Did we but continually think of Scipio and Lælius, we should not dare to transgress. Why do we not then make ourselves such persons as we dare not offend when they are present?



E P I S T L E XII.

The Novelty of Things does not move us, for want of not understanding the Reason of them.

THE whole subject of *natural philosophy* falls under these three heads; the heavens, air, and earth. The first treats of the nature of the stars; their form and magnitude; the substance of the heavens, whether solid or not; and whether they move of their own accord, or are moved by a-

ny other thing; if the stars are below them, or fixed in their orbs; what way the sun divides the seasons of the year; and such like. The second part inquires into the reason of things betwixt the heavens and the earth, as clouds, rain, snow, thunder, and whatsoever the air does or suffers. The third handles matters that have a regard to the earth; as the difference of soil, minerals, metals, plants, groves, &c. *But these are considerations quite foreign to our purpose, in the nature of them: though they may be of very proper and pertinent application.* There is not any man so brutal, and low in the world, but his soul is roused, and carried up to higher matters and thoughts, upon the appearance of any new light from heaven. What can be more worthy of admiration than the sun, and the stars in their courses, and glory? and yet so long as nature goes on in her common way, there is nobody takes notice of them: But when any thing falls out beyond expectation and custom, what a gazing, pointing, and questioning is there presently about it! the people gather together, and are at their wits end; not so much at the importance of the matter, as at the novelty. Every meteor sets people agog to know the meaning of it, and what it portends; and whether it be a star or a prodigy: so that it is worth the while to enquire into the nature, and philosophy of these lights, (*though not the business of this place*) that by discovering the reason, we may overcome the apprehension of them. There are many things which we know to be, and yet we know nothing at all of what they are. Is it not the mind that moves us, and restrains us? But, *what* that ruling power is, we do no more understand, than we know *where* it is. One will have it to be a spirit: another will have it to be a divine power; some only a subtile air: others an incorporeal being: and some again will have it to be only blood, and heat. Nay, so far is the mind from a perfect understanding of other things, that it is still in search of itself. It is not long since we came to find out the causes of eclipses: and farther experience will bring more things to light,

which are yet in the dark; but one age is too little for so many discoveries. It must be the work of successors, and posterity; and the time will come, when we shall wonder that mankind should be so long ignorant of things that lay so long open, and so easy to be known; truth is offered to all; but we must yet satisfy ourselves with what is already found; and leave some truths to be retrieved by after-ages. The exact truth of things is only known to God; but it is yet lawful for us to enquire, and to conjecture, though not with too much confidence: nor yet altogether without hope. In the first place however, let us learn things necessary; and if we have any time to spare, we may apply it to superfluities.

WHY do we concern ourselves about things which possibly *may* happen, and probably *not*? Let us rather provide against those dangers that watch us, and lie in wait for us. To suffer shipwreck, or to be crushed with the ruin of a house; these are great misfortunes, but they rarely happen. The deadly, and the hourly danger that threatens human life, is from one man to another. Other calamities do commonly give us some warning: the smoke gives us notice of a fire; the clouds bid us provide for a storm; but human malice has no prognostick; and the nearer it is, the fairer it looks. There is no trust to the countenance; we carry the shapes of men, and the hearts of beasts. Nay, we are worse than beasts; for a beast has only no reason at all; but the other is perverted, and turns his reason to his mischief. Besides that, all the hurt which they do, is out of fear, or hunger; but man takes delight in destroying his own species. From the *danger* we are in from men, we may consider our *duty* to them: and take care that we neither do, nor suffer wrong. It is but human, to be troubled at the misfortunes of another, and to rejoice at his prosperity. And, it is likewise prudent, to bethink ourselves what we are to do, and what we are to avoid; by which means we may keep ourselves from being either harmed, or deceived. The things that most provoke one man to do hurt to another, are hope, envy, hatred, fear, and

contempt; but contempt is the slightest. Nay, many men have betaken themselves to it for their security. There is no doubt, but he that is contemned, shall be trod upon; but then his enemy passes over him as unworthy of his anger.



E P I S T L E XIII.

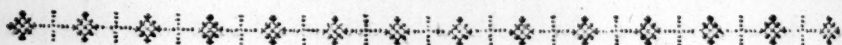
Every Man is the Artificer of his own Fortune. Of Justice and Injustice.

THE chief purport of the question betwixt you and me, is this; *whether a man had better part with himself, or something else that belongs to him?* And it is easily resolved in all competitions betwixt the goods of sense and fortune; and those of honour, and conscience. Those things which all men covet, are but specious outsidings; and there is nothing in them of real satisfaction. Nor is there any thing so hard, and terrible in the contrary, as the vulgar imagine; only the word *calamity* has an ill reputation in the world; and the very *name* is more grievous than the *thing itself*. What have I to complain of, if I can turn that to happiness, which others reckon a misery? A wise man either repels, or elects, as he sees the matter before him, without fearing the ill which he rejects, or admiring what he chuses. He is never surpris'd; but in the midst of plenty he prepares for poverty; as a prudent prince does for war, in the depth of peace. Our condition is good enough, if we make the best of it; and our felicity is in our own power. *Things that are adventitious, have no effect upon him, that studies to make sure of his happiness within himself.* Every man should stand upon his guard against fortune; and take most heed to himself when she speaks him fairest. All the advantage she gets upon us, is at unawares; whereas he that is provided for her, and stands the first shock, carries the day. It is not with common ac-

cidents of life, as with fire, and sword, that burn and cut all alike; but misfortunes work more or less, according to the weakness, or resolution of the patient. He that grieves for the loss of casual comforts, shall never want occasion of sorrow. We say generally *that every man has his weak side*: but allow me to tell you, that he that masters one vice, may master all the rest. He that subdues avarice, may conquer ambition. It is not for philosophy to excuse vices. The patient has little hopes of health, when the physician prescribes intemperance: though I know, on the other side, that he that does any thing above the common, does but set up himself for a mark to malevolence, and envy. Where laws are neglected, corruptions must inevitably be introduced: for the authority of virtue is shaken. And what are *laws*, but only *precepts* mingled with *threats*? With this difference, that the former deter us from wickedness, and the latter advise us to virtue. A preamble, methinks, derogates from the honour of a law, which ought to be short and clear; and to command, without suffering any expostulation. It is a flat, and an idle thing, a law with a prologue. Let me only be told my duty, and I am not to *dispute*, but to *obey*.

IF I have not acquitted myself of my last promise to you; know, that in all promises, there is a tacit reserve; *if I can; if I ought*: or, *if things remain in the same state*: so that by the change of circumstances, my obligation is void. I know very well the bonds of justice; and yet the practices of the world to the contrary. There are no greater exacters of faith, than the perfidious; no greater persecutors of falsehood, than the perjurious. He that loves his neighbour's wife, and for that very reason, because she is another man's, locks up his own. The wickedness of other men we have always in our sight, but we cast our own over our shoulders. A worse father chastises a better son: he that denies nothing to his own luxury, will forgive nothing in another man's. A tyrant is offended at bloodshed; the sacrilegious punishes theft, and the greater part of the world quarrels rather with

the offender, than with the offence. It is very seldom, that either the joy or the benefit of an estate injuriously gotten, continues long. Men go together by the ears about the booty, and we pay dear for things of small value. We live and die, lugging each other, disturbing one another's rest; and our lives are without fruit, and without pleasure. Justice is a natural principle. I must live thus with my friend, thus with my fellow citizen. Thus with my companion: and why? Because it is just: not for intention, or reward: for it is virtue alone, and nothing else, that pleases us. There is no law extant for keeping the secrets of a friend, or for not breaking faith with an enemy. And if a person betray a trust, there is a just reason for complaint. If I owe money to a wicked man, and he appoint me to pay it to a common prostitute, I will make no scruple of doing it, as it is not my business what he does with his money, but only to pay where it is due: it is my duty to pay it to a bad man, when he demands it, and to a good man when it is expedient.



E P I S T L E XIV.

Of Trust in Friendship. Prayer and bodily Labour.

SOME people who meet with crosses, which should be divulged to friends only, make them known to the first person they meet with: others are so close and suspicious, that they will suffer sooner than declare their grief to the most intimate friend: both are wrong; the one a good-natured error, the other a safe one. Now, as to the trust of a friend: there are many innocent things which in their own nature may seem to be privacies, and which custom has ever reputed so; in which cases, there is room enough for the offices of friendship, in the mutual communication of our most secret cares, and counsels. But yet we are so to govern ourselves, that

even an enemy should not turn our actions to reproach. For an honest man lives not to the world, but to his own conscience. There is a certain softness of nature, and spirit, that steals upon a man; and, like wine, or love, draws every thing from him. No man will either conceal, or tell, all that he hears. But he that tells the thing, will hardly conceal the author: so that it passes from one to another; and that which was at first a secret, does presently become a rumour. For this, and for many other reasons, we should set a watch upon our lips; and attend the more useful, and necessary work of contemplation. The first petition that we are to make to God Almighty, is for a *good conscience*; the second, for *health of mind*; and then, of *body*. There are some things which we directly wish for, as joy, peace, and the like; some that we pray for, only in case of necessity; as patience in pain, or sickness, &c. Others that concern our external behaviour, as modesty of countenance, decency of motion, and such a demeanour, as may become a prudent man. Many things may be useful; that is to say, they may be of more use than trouble: and yet not simply good. Some things we have for exercise, others for instruction, and pleasure. These things belong to us only as we are *men*, but not as we are *good men*. Some things serve to correct, and regulate our manners; others, to enquire into the nature, and original of them. How shall we know what a man is to do, if we do not search into his nature, and find out what is best for him, and what he is to avoid, and what to follow? Humanity not only keeps us from being vain, and courteous: but it makes us affable and gentle, in our words, actions, and affections. We have no precepts from the *liberal arts*, neither for this, nor for sincerity, integrity of manners, modesty, frugality; no, nor for clemency itself; which makes us as tender of another man's blood, as of our own; and distinguishes *men in society*, from *beasts of prey*. Some people are continually complaining of the wickedness of the times: but,

let no man depend upon the goodness of his cause, but rather upon the firmness of his courage; there may be force or bribery: I would hope the best, but prepare for the worst. What if I have served an ungrateful interest, and suffered wrongfully? An honest man is more troubled for the injustice of a severe sentence, than for the cruelty of it: and that his country has done a base thing; rather than that he himself suffers it. If he be banished, the shame is not his, but the author of it. He tempers his delights, and his afflictions, and says to himself, that if our joys cannot be lasting, neither will our sorrows. He is patient in his own misfortunes; without envy at the advantages of his *neighbours*. His virtue is bolder in the *opposition* of bad things, than tyranny itself can be in the *imposing* of them. This is rather to tell you what you do already, than what you should do. Go on as you have begun, and make haste to be perfect: but take notice, that the mind is to be now and then unbent; a glass of wine, a journey, a little fresh air, relieves it: but then there is a difference betwixt a remission, and a dissolution. Without exercise, a dull humour invades us; and it is remarkable, that men of brawny arms, and broad shoulders, have commonly weak souls. Some exercises are short, and gentle, and set the body right very soon. But whatever we do, let us return soon to the mind; for that must not lie idle. A little labour serves it; and it works in all seasons: in summer, winter, old age; nothing prevents it. And to make it more valuable, it is every day better than another. Not that I would have you continually poring upon a book neither; but allow yourself seasonable respites, and to it again. A coach, or a walk, does your body service, without interrupting your study: for you may converse, dictate, read, hear, at the same time. Now, though the exercise be commendable, and healthful; yet the masters of them are for the most part of lewd example. They divide their lives betwixt the tavern and the hot-house, and a swimming debauch is a good day's work with them. But, how ready are we to set

bounds to other people, and none to ourselves; and to observe their warts, when our own bodies are covered with ulcers! What is more ordinary, than for people to reverence and detest the fortunate, at the same time, even for doing those things which they themselves would do, if they could! There might be some hope of our amendment, if we would but confess our faults; as a man must be awake that tells his dream. There are some diseases which are entirely hopeless, and past cure; but they may yet be palliated; and philosophy, if it cannot help in one case, it may in another. A gentle remission is a degree of health to a man in a fever; and if a man be not perfectly sound, it is something to be curable. But we are backward of being at the trouble of attending our own business: We lead such a life in the world, as some lazy people do in a market, who stand gaping about them without either buying or selling. We miss our opportunities; and if they are not caught in the nick, they are lost past recovery.



E P I S T L E XV.

The Danger of Flattery; and in which Cases a Man may be suffered to command himself.

IT was usual for Demetrius to say, *that knavery was a ready way to riches*; and to throw aside virtue, was the first step to thriving in the world. Study the art of *flattery*, (so acceptable now a-days) this will do your business, without running any hazard by sea, in trade, husbandry, or law-suits. Not one man in a thousand is proof against an artificial flatterer; nay, though we shake him off, yet we may like him well enough, and the quarrel is soon made up. We seem to oppose him, but we do not shut the door against him; or if we do, it is but as a mistress will do sometimes upon her

servant, *she would be well enough satisfied to be hindered; and take it much better yet to have it broke open.* Beside that, a man lies generally most open where he is attacked: how shamefully are great men fawned upon by their slaves; and accustomed to fulsome praises? When the only business of those, that call themselves friends, is to try who can most cleverly deceive his master. For want of knowing their own strength, they believe themselves as great, as their parasites represent them: and venture upon broils, and wars, to their irreparable destruction. They break alliances, and transport themselves into passions, which, for want of better advice, hurry them on to blood and confusion. They pursue every wild imagination as a certainty, and think it a greater disgrace to be bent, than to be broken. They set up their rest upon the perpetuity of a tottering fortune, till they come at last to see the ruin of themselves, and their possessions; and too late, to understand, that their misfortunes, and their flatteries were of the same date. There is a sparing, and a crafty flattery, that looks like plain-dealing. But all flatteries are words of course, and he that receives them, will give them. Nay, let it be never so shameless, a man takes all to himself, though his very conscience gives him the lie. Cruelty shall be translated mercy; extortion and oppression shall be called liberality; lust, and gluttony, to the highest degree in the world, shall be magnified for temperance. Now, what hope is there of his changing for the better, that values himself for the best of men already? The stroke of an arrow convinced Alexander, that he was not the son of Jupiter, but a mortal man. And thus, upon the experiment of human frailty, should every man say to himself, Am not I sad sometimes, and tortured betwixt hope and fear? Do I not hanker after vain pleasure? He that is not yet satisfied, is not so good as he should be. The words of flatterers, and parasites seldom die in the hearing; and when they have gained admittance, they grow more and more upon you: and shortly they will tell you, that *virtue, philosophy,*

and *justice*, are but empty sounds; let every man live while he may, and make the best of the present; and not govern himself at a rate, as if he were to keep a diary for his father: what madness is it, to enrich a man's heir, and starve himself: and to turn a friend into an enemy? For, his joy will be proportioned to what you leave him: never trouble yourself for these superfluous censurs of other men's lives, and enemies of their own: these pedagogues of mankind are not worthy of your care. These are the people, that draw us from our parents and country, our friends, and other necessary duties.

I WOULD neither be deceived myself, nor deceive others; but if a man cannot live without it, let him commend himself and say thus. "I have applied myself to liberal studies; though both the poverty of my condition, and my own reason, might rather have put me upon the making of my fortune. I have given proof, that all minds are capable of goodness; and have illustrated the obscurity of my family, by the eminence of my virtue. I have preserved my faith in all extremities, and I have ventured my life for it. I have never spoken one word contrary to my conscience, and I have been more solicitous for my friend, than for myself: I never made any base submissions to any man; and I have never done any thing unworthy of a resolute, and of an honest man. My mind is raised so much above all dangers, that I have mastered all hazards; and I bless myself in the providence which gave me that experiment of my virtue: for I thought, it was not proper, that so great glory should come cheap. Nay, I did not so much as consider, whether good faith should suffer for me, or I for it. I stood my ground, without laying violent hands upon myself, to escape the rage of the powerful; though under Caligula I saw cruelties, to such a degree, that to be killed outright was accounted a mercy. And yet I persisted in my honesty, to shew, that I was ready to do more than die for it. My mind was never corrupted with gifts; and

“ when the humour of avarice was at the height, I never laid
 “ my hand on any unlawful gain: I have been temperate in
 “ my diet; modest in my conversation; courteous and affa-
 “ ble to my inferiors; and have ever paid a respect and re-
 “ verence to my betters.” After all, what I have said, is ei-
 ther true or false: If true, I have commended myself before
 a *great witness*, my own *conscience*; if false, I am ridiculous,
 without any witness. Every man should avoid the world,
 and retire to himself; for old and young, men, women, and
 children, are all wicked; not only a few, but all in general.



E P I S T L E XVI.

*A general Dissolution of Manners; with a Censure of corrupt
 Magistrates.*

THE general complaint at all times, is constantly the
 corruption of the present time; it has ever been, and
 always will be so: not considering that the wickedness of the
 world is always the same, as to the degree of it; though it
 may sometimes change a little. At one time gluttony pre-
 vails, at another time whoring; sometimes too great atten-
 tion to dress, by which the improvement of the mind is ne-
 glected; at another time drinking is the mode, every one
 striving who shall debauch himself most; and sometimes a
 satirical humour. This prostitute looseness of manners, makes
 way for sedition, and cruelty. Under Tiberius, the plague
 of our *dilators*, or *informers*, was worse than any civil war.
 It was an age, wherein the words of men, in their cups; the
 most innocent railleries, and ingenious freedoms of conversa-
 tion, were made capital. When it was dangerous to be ho-
 nest, and only profitable to be vicious. And not only bad
 things, but vice itself was both commended and preferred;
 for all insolences, when they come to be exemplary, they pre-

tend to be lawful. Authority in sin is an incentive to it: and it is at least an excuse, if not a warrant, to transgress, after great example. Beside that, we are prone enough to do amiss, even of ourselves, without either a leader, or a companion. But, it is a malevolent sort of comfort, that which men take in the number of the wicked.

THE worst of all is, that whereas in other cases the people are ashamed of their errors; in that of life, they are delighted with them, and so become incurable. The pilot takes no pleasure in running upon a rock; nor the physician in the death of his patient; nor the advocate in the loss of his client's cause. But, on the other side, the criminal rejoices in his uncleanness, in his ambition, and in his theft; and never troubles himself for the fault, but for the miscarriage. He makes infamy the reward of lewdness, and values himself upon his excellency in ill-doing. The question is, who shall be most impious? We have every day worse appetites, and less shame; sobriety, and conscience, are become foolish, and scandalous things; and, it is half the relish of our lusts, that they are committed in the face of the sun. Innocency is not only rare, but lost; and mankind is entered into a sort of confederacy against virtue. To say nothing of intestine wars; fathers and sons in league against one another; poisoned fountains; troops in search of the banished and proscribed; prisons crammed with worthy men; cities demolished; rapes and adultery authorized; publick perjuries and frauds; a violation of common faith; and all the bonds of human society cancelled. *Adultery* is the ready way to *wedlock*, and *marriage* to a *single-life* again; for *parting* is one condition of it. For, they divorce to marry; and they marry, to be divorced. That which they often talk, and hear of, they readily do. What shame can there be of incontinence, when modesty is become a reproach; and when it is the custom for every wife to provide herself a gallant or two, beside her husband? It is an idle thing to think of ever converting those

people, that find both advantage, and reputation in their wickedness.

WOULD any man ever have imagined, that Clodius should have come off by bribery, for debauching the wife of Cæsar, and prophaning the publick vows for the safety of the people; but, the judges were corrupted; and not only with money, but with the bodies of young men and women: so that his absolution was fouler than his crime; the *bribe* was *adultery*, as well as the *offence*; and he had no way to be safe, till he had made his judges like himself. *Name the woman you have a mind for, (says he) and you shall have her. And when you have committed the sin, condemn it if you dare. Appoint the time, and the place, and she shall be ready for you;* nay, the practice was so gross, that the bench desired a guard of the senate, to secure them from the people. Before the sentence was given, he was an adulterer; in the management of the cause, he was a pander; and his way of escaping punishment, was fouler than the offence that deserved it. A lust that spared not the altar, and perverted justice upon the very seat of judgment. The question was, *whether an adulterer should escape unpunished;* and the determination was, that, *without being an adulterer he could not be secure.* Nor is it likely, that their conversation was one jot honester than their sentence: these things have been done, and will be done. Discipline, and fear, may restrain the licence of the people; but it is not to be thought, that they will never be good of their own accord. But, let us not yet speak of luxury, and dissolution, as the vices of the age; which, in reality are only the vices of the men. The practices of our times are moderate, compared with those, when the delinquent pleaded *not guilty* to the bench, and the bench confessed itself *guilty* to the delinquent; and when one adultery was excused by another. In those days is passed for great piety, not to be very impious. He that gave most, carried the cause; and it is but according to the law of nations, for him that buys, to sell. And, it is not to be noted, that a man may be as co-

ciples. The original of all mankind was the same; and, it is only a clear conscience, that makes any man *noble*. For, that derives even from heaven itself. It is the saying of a great man, that if we could trace our descents, we should find all slaves to come from princes, and all princes from slaves. But fortune has turned all things topsy turvy in a long story of revolutions. It is most certain, that our beginning had nothing before it, and our ancestors were some of them splendid, others fordid, as it happened. We have lost the memoirs of our extraction, and in reality, it matters not whence it came, but whither we go. Nor is it any more to our honour, the glory of our predecessors, than it is to their shame, the wickedness of their posterity. We are all of us composed of the same elements; why should we then value ourselves upon our nobility of blood, as if we were not all of us equal, if we could but recover our evidence? But, when we can carry it no farther, the *herald* provides some *hero* to supply the place of an illustrious original; and there is the rise of arms, and families. For a man to spend his life, in pursuit of a title, that serves only when he dies, to furnish out an *epitaph*, is below a wise man's business.

It pleases me extremely to understand by all that come out of your quarters, that you behave yourself humanely, and tenderly towards your servants. It is the part of a wise, and of a good man, to deal with his inferior, as he would have his superior deal with him; for servants are not only men, but a kind of humble friends: and fortune has no more power over them, than over their masters: and he that duly considers, how many servants have come to be masters, and how many masters to be servants, will lay no great stress of argument, either upon the one, or upon the other. Some use their servants worse than brutes, in slavish attendances, betwixt their drink, and their lusts; some are brought up only to carve, others to season; and all to serve the turns of pomp, and luxury. Is it not a barbarous custom, to make it almost capital, for a servant only to cough, sneeze, sigh, or but wag

his lips, while he is in waiting; and, to keep him the whole night, mute, and fasting; yet so it comes to pass, that they that dare not speak *before* their masters, will not forbear talking *of* them; and those, on the other side, that were allowed a modest freedom of speech in their masters' entertainments, were most obstinately silent upon the torture, rather than they would betray them. But we live as if a servant were not made of the same materials with his master, or to breathe the same air, or to live, and die, under the same conditions. It is worthy of observation, that the most imperious masters over their own servants, are, at the same time, the most abject slaves to the servants of other masters. I will not distinguish a servant by his office, but by his manners. The one is the work of fortune, the other of virtue. But, we look only to his quality, and not to his merit. Why should not a brave action, rather dignify the condition of a servant, than the condition of a servant lessen a brave action? I would not value a man for his cloaths, or degree, any more than I would do a horse for his trapping. What though he be a servant! Shew me any man that is not so, to his lusts, his avarice, his ambition, his palate, to his mistress; nay, to other men's servants; and we are all of us servants to *fear*: insolent we are, many of us at home; servile and despised abroad; and none are more liable to be trampled upon, than those that have gotten a habit of giving affronts by suffering them. What matters it how many masters we have, when it is but one slavery? and whosoever despises that, is perfectly free, let his masters be never so many. That man is only free, not whom fortune has a *little* power over, but over whom she has *none at all*: which state of liberty is an inestimable good, when we desire nothing, that is either superfluous, or vicious. They are asses that are made for burden, and not the nobler sort of horses. In the civil wars, betwixt Caesar and Pompey, the question was not, who should be slaves, or free, but who should be master. Ambition is the same thing in private, that it is in publick; and the duties

are effectually the same, betwixt the master of a kingdom, and the master of a family. As I would treat some servants kindly, because they are worthy; and others to make them so; so on the other side, I would have a servant to reverence his master; and rather to love him than fear him. Some there are that think this too little for a master, though it is all that we pay, even to God himself. The body of a servant may be bought, and sold; but his mind is at full liberty.



E P I S T L E XVIII.

We are not so just to God as to Men. Of Life and Death; of Good and Evil.

THE loss of a friend is undoubtedly one of the greatest trials of human frailty; and no man is so much exalted above the sense of that calamity, as not to be affected with it. And yet if a man supports himself magnanimously under so severe a trial, people sometimes say, *He is void of all sense of pity and good nature*: If he sinks under it, they then call him effeminate: So that he is blamed whatever way it be. And what is the reason of the trouble, I beseech you, but that he *might have lived longer, in respect of his years, and in effect, that he might have done so, in regard of his usefulness to the world*? I am surpris'd to see men that are really just and temperate in all their dealings with men, and in business, so exceedingly to forget themselves, in this point. But we have, in excuse of this error, the failings of the whole world with us for company. For even those that are the most scrupulously conscientious toward men, are yet unthankful, and injurious to Providence.

It is not the number of days that makes a life long, but the full employment of them, upon the main end, and pur-

pose of life, which is the perfecting of the mind, in making a man the absolute master of himself. I reckon the matter of age among external things, the main point is, to live and die with honour. Every man that lives, is upon the way, and must go through with his journey, without stopping, till he comes at the end: and wheresoever it ends, if it ends well, it is a perfect life. There is an invincible fate that attends all mortals; and one generation is condemned to tread upon the heels of another. Take away from life, the power of death, and it is a slavery. As Caligula was passing upon the way, an old man, that was a prisoner, and with a beard down to his girdle, begged Cæsar, that he might be put to death. *Why*, says Cæsar to him, *are you not dead already?* So that you see some desire it, as well as others fear it: And why not? When it is one of the duties of life, to die: And it is one of the comforts of it too: For the living are under the power of fortune, but she has no dominion at all over the dead. How can life be pleasant to any man, that is not prepared to part with it? Or what loss can be easier to us than that which can never be missed, or desired again? I was brought by a defluetion into a hopeless consumption; and I frequently resolved to deliver myself from a miserable life, by a violent death. But the tenderness I had for an aged, and indulgent father held my hands: For, thought I to myself, it will be very hard for my father to be without me, though I could most willingly part with myself. In the case of a particular disease, a physician may propound a remedy: But the only remedy for all diseases, is the contempt of death. (Though I know too, that it is the business of a long life to learn that lesson.)

OH! the happiness of distinguishing good from evil, in the works of Providence! But, instead of raising our thoughts to the contemplation of divine matters, and enquiring into the original, the state, and appointed issue of created nature, we are digging of the earth, and serving of our avarice; neglecting all the good things that are so frankly offer-

ed to us. How great a folly and madness is it for men that are dying, and in the hands of death already, to extend their hopes, and to carry their ambition, and desires to the grave, unsatisfied? for whatsoever is tainted with those hydropick appetites, can never have enough, either of money, or power. It is a strange thing, that among those that place their happiness in sense, they are the most miserable that seem to be happiest. The riches of nature are the most precious treasures. What has any man to desire more, than to keep himself from cold, hunger and thirst? It is not the quantity, but the opinion that governs in this case: *That can never be little, which is enough: Nor does any man account that to be much which is too little.* The benefits of fortune are so far comfortable to us, as we enjoy them without losing the possession of ourselves. Let us purge our minds, and follow nature; we shall otherwise be still either fearing, or craving, and slaves to accidents. Not that there is any pleasure in poverty, but it is a great felicity for a man to bring his mind to be contented even in that state, which fortune itself cannot make worse. Methinks our quarrels with ambition, and profitable employments, are somewhat like those we have with our mistresses; we do not hate them, but wrangle with them. In short, betwixt those things which are sought and coveted, and yet complained of; and those things which we have lost, and pretend that we cannot live without, our misfortunes are purely voluntary: And we are servants, not so much by necessity, as by choice. No man can be happy that is not free, and fearless: And no man can be so, but he, that by philosophy has got the better of fortune. In what place soever we are, we shall find ourselves environed with the miseries of human nature; some without us; that either deceive us, or force us: Others within us, that eat up our very hearts, in the middle of solitude. And it is not yet, as we imagine, that fortune has long arms; she meddles with no body, that does not first lay hold upon her. We should keep a distance therefore, and withdraw into the know-

ledge of nature, and of ourselves: We understand the original of things; the order of the world, the circulation of the seasons, the courses of the stars, and that the whole frame of the universe (only the earth excepted) is but a perpetual motion. We know the occasion of day and night; of light and of darkness; but it is at a distance: Let us direct our thoughts then to that place where we shall see all nearer hand. And, it is not this hope neither, that makes a wise man resolute at the point of death, because death lies in his way to heaven; for the soul of a wise man is there beforehand: Nay, if there were nothing after death to be either expected, or feared, he would yet leave this world with as great a mind, tho' he were to pass into a state of annihilation. He that reckons every hour his last; a day, or an age, is the same to him. Fate is doing our work while we sleep; death steals upon us insensibly; and the more insensibly, because it passes under the name of life. From childhood we grow up imperceptibly to old age; and this increase of our life duly considered, is a diminution of it. We take death to be before us, but it is behind us; and has already swallowed up all that is past: Wherefore, make use of the present; and trust nothing to the morrow; for delay is just so much time lost. We catch hold of hopes, and flatteries, of a little longer life, as drowning men do upon thorns, or straws, that either hurt us, or deceive us. You will ask, perhaps, what I do myself, that preach at this rate. Truly, I do like some ill husbands, that spend their estates, and yet keep their accounts: I run out; but yet I can tell which way it goes. And I have the fate of ill husbands too, another way; for every body pities me, and no body helps me. The soul is never in the right place so long as it fears to quit the body. Why should a man trouble himself to extend life, which, at best, is a kind of punishment; and at longest, amounts to very little more than nothing? He is ungrateful, that takes the period of pleasure for an injury; and he is foolish that knows no good, but the present. Nay, there are some courses of life, which a man

ought to quit, though with life itself: As the trade of killing others, instead of learning to die himself. Life itself is neither good, nor evil; but only a place for good and evil: It is a kind of tragi-comedy. Let it be well acted, and it does not signify whether it be long or short. We are apt to be misled by appearances of things, and when they come to us recommended in good terms, and by great example, they will impose frequently upon very wise men. The mind is never right, but when it is at peace within itself, and independent upon any thing from abroad. The soul is in heaven, even while it is in the flesh; if it be purged of natural corruptions, and taken up with heavenly thoughts: And, whether any body sees us, or takes notice of us, it matters not. Virtue will of itself break forth, though never so much pains be taken to suppress it. And it is all one, whether it be known or no: But after-ages however will do us no right, when we are dead, and insensible of the veneration they allow us. He that is wise, will compute the conditions of humanity; and contract the subject both of his joys, and fears. And it is time well spent, so to abate the one, that he may likewise diminish the other. He will come to understand by this practice, how uncertain, how short, and how safe many of those things are which we usually fear. When I view a glittering train, or a splendid house, I look upon it, as I do upon courts, which are only the schools of avarice and ambition; and at best they are more for shew than possession. Great goods are seldom lasting, and the fairest happiness is of the shortest duration.

E P I S T L E XIX.

Of true Courage.

THE contempt of all hazards is generally termed Fortitude. A brave man fears nothing more than the weakness of being affected with popular glory. Neither gold nor silver dazzles his eyes; he tramples upon all the terrors and glories of fortune; he esteems himself a citizen and soldier of the world, and maintains his station in it against all oppositions and accidents. He does not only suffer, but court the most dangerous occasions of virtue, and those adventures which are most terrible to others: For he esteems himself upon experiment; and is more ambitious of being thought good than happy. Mucius lost his hand with more honour than he could have preserved it: He was a greater conqueror without it, than he could have been with it: For with the very stump of it, he overcame two kings, Tarquin and Porfenna. Rutilia followed Cotta into banishment; she stayed, and she returned with him too; and soon after she lost him, without so much as shedding a tear: A great instance of her courage. This (says Epicurus) is the last, and the blessedest day of my life; when he was ready to expire in an extreme torment of the stone. It is never said of the three hundred Fabii, that they were *overcome*, but that they were *slain*: Nor of Regulus, that he was *vanquished* by the Carthaginians, but that he was *taken*. The Spartans prohibited all exercises where the victory was declared by the voice, and submission of him that was worsted. When Phaeton begged of Phœbus the government of the chariot of the sun for one day, the poets make him so far from being discouraged by his father's telling him of the danger of the undertaking, and how he himself had much ado to keep his

feat for fear, when he looked down from the meridian, that it proved a spur to his importunity. *That is the thing* (says Phaeton) *that I would be at; to stand firm in that difficulty, where Phœbus himself trembles.* Security is the caution of narrow minds: But as fire tries gold, so does difficulty and danger try virtuous men. Not but that he may be as valiant that watches upon the tower, as he that fights upon his knees; only the one has had the good fortune of an occasion for the proof of his resolution. As some creatures are cruel; others cunning, and some timorous; so man is endued with a glorious, and an excellent spirit, that prompts him, not so much to regard a safe life as an honest one. Providence has made him the master of this lower world; and he looks upon it as his duty to sacrifice his own particular to the advantage of the whole. And yet there is a great difference, even in the same action done by a brave person, and by a stupid: As the death of Cato was honourable; but that of Brutus was shameful. Nor is it death itself that we recommend for glorious; but it is a glorious thing to die as we ought. Neither is it poverty, banishment, or pain, that we commend; but the man that behaves himself bravely under those afflictions. How were the gladiators contemned that called for quarter? And those on the other side favoured, that despised it. Many a man saves his life, by not fearing to lose it; and many a man loses his life, for being over-sollicitous to save it. We are many times afraid of dying by one thing; and we come to die by another. As for example; we are threatned by an enemy, and we die by a pleurisy. The fear of death enlarges all other things that we fear. To bear it with constancy, we should compute, that whether our lives be long or short, it comes all to the same thing at last: Some hours we lose; what if they were days, months, years? What signifies it, if I never arrive at that which I must certainly part with when I have it? Life is but one point of flying time; and that which is to come, is no more mine, than that which is past. And,

we have this for our comfort too, that whosoever now fears death, will, some time or other, come to wish it. If death be troublesome or terrible, the fault is in *us*, and not in *death itself*. It is as great madness for a man to fear that which he is not to feel, as that which he is not to suffer; the difference lies in the manner of dying, and not in the issue of death itself. It is a more inglorious death to be smothered with perfumes, than to be torn to pieces with pincers. Provided my mind be not sick, I shall not much mind my body. I am prepared for my latter end, without troubling myself when it will come. Stoicks and other philosophers are like men and women, both useful for society, with this difference, one is born for government, the other for subjection. Other sects deal with their disciples as plausible physicians do with their patients, they please them by flattery; but the Stoicks consider their profit more than their pleasure, and go to work in a bolder way.



E P I S T L E XX.

It can never be too late to learn. The Advantages of a private Life; and the Slavery of a publick one. The Ends of Punishments.

LET no man who has not given good advice to himself, pretend to advise others. In short, it is as hard to give good advice, as to take it: However, let it be settled between the two parties, that the one intends to confer a benefit, and the other to receive it. Some people will not be taught; others are ashamed of it, as they would be of going to school when they are old: But it is never too late to learn what it is necessary to know; and it can never be a shame to learn what we do not know. When any thing is wrong in our bodies, or estates, we have recourse immedi-

ately to the physician, or the lawyer for help: And why not to the philosopher, in the disorders of our mind? No man *lives*, but he that applies himself to *wisdom*; for he takes into his own life the supplement of all past ages. It is a fair step towards happiness, and virtue, to take pleasure in the conversation of good and wise men: And where that cannot be had, the next point is, to keep no company at all. Solitude affords business enough; and the entertainment is comfortable and easy. Whereas publick offices are vexatious and restless. There is a great difference betwixt a life of leisure, and of laziness. When people will express their envy of a man in a happy situation; they will say, *He lives at his ease*. When in reality, the man is *dead alive*. There is a *long life*, and there is a *long death*: The former, when we enjoy the benefits of a right mind; and the other, when the senses are extinguished; and the body dead before-hand. He that makes me the master of my own time, and places me in a state of freedom, lays a great obligation upon me. As a merchant, that has a considerable fortune abroad, is more sensible of the blessing of a fair wind and safe passage, than he that has only ballast, or some coarse commodity in the ship: So that man who employs his privacy upon thoughts divine, and precious, is more sensible of the comfort of that freedom, than he that bends his meditation a bad way. For, he considers all the benefits of his exemption from common duties, he enjoys himself with infinite pleasure, and makes his gratitude answerable to his obligations. He is the best of subjects, and the happiest of men; and he lives to nature and to himself. Most men are to themselves, the worst company they can keep. If they be good, quiet, and temperate, they are as good alone, as in company: But if otherwise, let them discourse with others, and avoid themselves: But, he that has made himself good company, can never be too much alone. Many a ship is lost in the harbour, but more in the ocean; as many an honest man is condemned, but more guilty. This however is certain, he that cannot

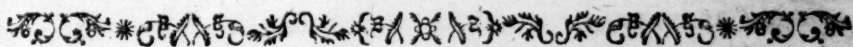
secure himself in privacy, shall be much more exposed in publick. That which the world calls happiness, is greedy itself, and exposed to the greediness of others. Prosperity, like a fair gale, upon a strong current, carries a man in a trice, out of the very sight of peace, and quiet; and if it be not tempered, and regulated, it is so far from easing us, that it proves an oppression to us. A busy, and a fortunate man in the world, calls many men his friends, that are at most but his guests. And if people flock to him, it is but as they do to a fountain, which they both exhaust and trouble.

WHAT greater slavery can there be than that of princes in this very respect, that they are chained to their post, and cannot make themselves less? All their words and actions are descanted upon, and made publick discourse; and there are many things allowable to a private man, that are not fit for a governor. I can walk alone, where I chuse, without a sword, without fear, and without company; whereas a prince must be armed in peace, and cannot with dignity quit his guards. Fortune has him in custody; a train besets him wherever he goes; and there is no making of any escape. He is little better than nailed to his place, and it is the perfection of his misery, that he cannot go less. He can no more conceal himself, than the sun in the firmament; whereas his subjects may come and go, change habits and humour, without being taken notice of. Servitude is the fate of palaces; the splendor of a crown draws all men's eyes upon it. When Cæsar speaks, the whole world hears his voice, and trembles at his displeasure; and where it falls, it shakes whatsoever is near it. His lips are the oracles of the people; and the government is the cement that binds them together: But still he that is master of many, is the servant of more. The power, it is true, of all things belongs to the *prince*; but the property, to particular persons. And the same thing may be both yours and mine in several respects. We cannot say that a son, or a servant has nothing, because a master, or a father may take it away if he will; or

that he cannot give willingly, because they may prevent it; whether he will or no. *This is power, and true dominion; and not to rule and command, when we may do it when we please.* The strength of a prince is the love of his people; for there is nothing so great, but it must itself perish; when it is become the common safety that it should be so. Tyrants are hated, because they are feared; and because they are hated they will be feared. They are rendered odious to posterity; and they had better never have been born, than to stand upon record for the plagues of mankind. Wretched is that people, where their very keepers are their executioners. And, it is not an armed tyranny neither, but the unarmed vices of avarice, and envy, that we ought to be most afraid of. Some cannot endure to have their vices touched, but will shrink and struggle under the operation, as if they were under the hand of a surgeon. But this shall not prevent me from lancing and probing, on account of the cries and groans of the patient. Every man should have a *monitor* at his elbow, to keep him from covetousness, by shewing him how rich a man he may be with a little: From ambition, by representing the disputes and hazards that accompany greatness; which makes him as great a burden to others, as he is to himself. When it comes to that once; fear, anxiety and weariness, makes us philosophers. A sickly fortune produces wholesome advices; and we reap this fruit from our adversity, that it brings us at last to wisdom.

Now though clemency in a prince be so necessary and profitable a virtue; and cruelty so dangerous an excess; it is yet the office of a governor, as of the master of an hospital, to keep sick and mad men in order: And in cases of extremity, the very member is to be cut off with the ulcer. All punishment is either for amendment, or for example, or that others may live more safely. What is the end of destroying those poisonous, and dangerous creatures, which are never to be reclaimed, but to prevent mischief? And yet there may be as much danger in doing too much, as too little. A particular

mutineer may be punished, but when the whole army is in a revolt, there must be a general pardon. The multitude of offenders, is their security, and protection: For there is no quarrelling with a public vice, where the custom of offending takes away the shame of it; and neither is it prudent, by many punishments to shew a city, that the wicked are so much the major part: Beside, that it is as great a dishonour for a *prince* to have many executions, or for a *physician* to have many funerals. Shall a father disinherit a son for the first offence? He must first admonish and threaten, before he punishes. Gentle remedies should be applied while there is hope. But some nations are untractable, and always unwilling to serve, though not capable of commanding.



E P I S T L E XXI.

A sound Body and a quiet Mind are the two greatest Blessings of Life. The Extravagance of the Roman Luxury. The Moderation and Simplicity of former Times.

EPICURUS looks upon a *sound body* and a *quiet mind*, as the two greatest blessings of life: Which is reducing human happiness to a state of health and virtue. To look upon vice as odious and ridiculous, is the way to be happy; and it is proper for every man to mind his own business; for he who makes himself uneasy for other people's distresses, must always be unhappy. A virtuous life must be all of a piece; and not advance by starts and intervals, and then go on where it left; for this is losing of ground. We are to press, and persevere; for the greatest difficulties are yet to come. If I give up my course, when shall I come to pronounce these words, *I am a conqueror*? Not a conqueror of barbarous enemies and savage nations; but I have subdued covetousness, ambition, and those lusts that have subjected

even the greatest of conquerors. Who was a greater than Alexander, that extended his empire from Thracia to the utmost bounds of the East? But yet he burnt Persepolis at the request of a prostitute, to gratify his lust. He overcame Darius, and slew many hundred of the Persians; but yet he murdered Calisthenes: And that single blot has sullied the glory of all his victories. All the wishes of mortals, and all the benefits which we can either give or receive, will not produce a happy life. Those things which the common people gape after, are fleeting and vain. Whereas happiness is lasting; nor is it to be estimated by number, measure, or parts: For it is full, and perfect. I do not speak as if I myself were arrived at that blessed state of repose: But it is something yet to be on the mending hand. It is with me, as with a man that is creeping out of an illness; he feels yet some grudgings of it; he is every foot examining of his pulse; and suspects every touch of heat to be a reliet of his fever. Just in this way, I am jealous of myself. The best remedy that I know in this case, is, to go on with confidence, and not to be mislead by mistakes of other people. It is with our manners, as with our healths; it is a degree of virtue, the abatement of vice; as it is a degree of health, the abatement of a fit.

SOME place their happiness in riches; some in the liberty of the body; and others in the pleasures of the sense and palate. But, what are metals, tastes, sounds, or colours, to the mind of a reasonable creature? He that sets his heart upon riches, the very fear of poverty will torment him. He that is ambitious, shall be galled with envy at any man that gets before him: For, in that case, he that is not first, is last. I do not speak against riches neither; for if they hurt a man, it is his own folly. They may be indeed the cause of mischief; as they are a temptation to those that do it. Instead of courage, they may inspire us with arrogance; and instead of greatness of mind, with insolence; which is, in truth, but the counterfeit of magnanimity. What is it to

be a prisoner, and in chains? It is no more than that situation to which many princes have been reduced; and out of which many men have been advanced to the authority of princes. It is not to say, *I have no master*; in time you may have one. Might not Hecuba, Cræsus, and the mother of Darius have said as much? And where is the happiness of luxury either? When a man divides his life betwixt the kitchen, and the stews; betwixt an anxious conscience, and a nauseous stomach? Caligula, who was born to shew the world what mischief might be done by a concurrence of great wickedness, and a great fortune, spent near 10000 l. sterling upon a supper. The works and inventions of it are prodigious, not only in the counterfeiting of nature, but even in the surpassing it. The Romans had their brooks in their parlours, and found their dinners under their tables. The mullet was reckoned stale, unless it died in the hand of the guest: And they had their glasses to put them into, that they might the better observe all the changes and motions of them in the last agony betwixt life and death. So that they fed their eyes before their bodies. - *Look how it reddens, says one, there is no vermilion like it. Take notice of these veins; and that same grey brightness upon the head of it. And now he is at his last gasp: See how pale he turns, and all of a colour.* These people would not have given themselves half this trouble with a dying friend; nay, they would abandon a father or a brother, in his last minutes, to entertain themselves with the barbarous spectacle of a dying fish. And that which enhances the esteem of every thing, is the price of it: Infomuch, that water itself, which ought to be gratuitous, is exposed to sale in their conservatories of ice, and snow. Nay, we are uneasy that we cannot buy breath, light; and that we have the air itself *gratis*; as if our conditions were evil, because nature has left something to us in common. But luxury contrives ways to set a price upon the most necessary, and communicable benefits in nature: Even those

benefits which are free to birds and beasts, as well as to men; and to serve indifferently for the use of the most sluggish creatures. But, how comes it that fountain-water is not cold enough to serve us, unless it be bound up in ice? So long as the stomach is sound, nature discharges her functions without trouble: But, when the blood comes to be inflamed with excess of wine, or meats, simple water is not cold enough to allay that heat; and we are obliged to make use of remedies, which remedies themselves are vices. We heap suppers upon dinners, and dinners upon suppers, without intermission. Good God! How easy is it to quench a sound, an honest thirst? But when the palate is hardened, we taste nothing: And that which we take for thirst, is only the rage of a fever. Hippocrates delivered it as an *aphorism*, that *women were never bald, nor gouty, but in one singular case*. Women have not altered their nature since, but they have changed the course of their lives; for, by taking the liberties of men, they partake as well of their diseases, as of their wickedness. They sit up as late, drink as much; nay, in their very appetites they are masculine too; they have lost the advantage of their sex, by their vices.

OUR ancestors, when they were free, lived either in caves, or in arbours: But slavery came in with gildings, and with marble. I would have him that comes into my house, take more notice of the master, than of the furniture. The golden age was before architecture: Arts came in with luxury, and we do not hear of any philosopher, that was either a *lock-smith*, or a *painter*. Who was the wiser man, think you, he that invented a saw; or the other; who, upon seeing a boy drink water out of the hollow of his hand, brake his pitcher, with this check to himself, *What a fool am I, to trouble myself with superfluities!* Carving is one man's trade; cooking is another's: Only he is more miserable that teaches it for pleasure, than he that learns it for necessity. It was luxury, not philosophy, that invented fish ponds, as well as palaces: Where, in case of bad weather at sea, they might have

fishes, to supply their gluttony in harbour. We do not only pamper our lusts, but provoke them, as if we were to learn the very art of voluptuousness. What was it but avarice, that originally brake the union of society; and proved the cause of poverty, even to those that were the most wealthy? Every man possessed all, till the world came to appropriate possessions to themselves. In the first age, nature was both a law, and a guide, and the *best* governed; which was but according to nature too. The largest and the strongest bull leads the head; the goodliest elephant; and, among men too, in the blessed times of innocence, the best was uppermost. They chose governors for their manners; who neither acted any violence, nor suffered any. They protected the weak against the mighty; and perswaded, or dissuaded as they saw occasion. Their prudence provided for their people; their courage kept them safe from dangers; their bounty both supplied, and adorned their subjects. It was a *duty* then to *command*, not a *government*. In those times, no man had either an inclination to do an injury, or reason to do it. He who commanded well, was well obeyed: And to forsake the disobedient was the worst threats they could make them. But tyranny crept in with the corruption of times, and the world began to have occasion for laws; and these laws were made by wise men, such as Solon and Lycurgus, who learned their trade in the school of Pythagoras.



E P I S T L E XXII.

Man is made of Soul and Body, and has a civil War within himself naturally. The difference between a Life of Pleasure and of Virtue.

THERE is not a mixture in any creature so disproportionate as that of the soul and body of man. There is intemperance joined with divinity; folly with severity; sloth with activity; and uncleanness with piety. A good sword is no worse for having a bad scabbard. Imaginary fears move us more than real dangers; for reality is certain, but imagination exposes us to the licence and conjecture of a distracted mind; and our enemies are not more imperious than our pleasures. We set our hearts upon things fleeting and transitory, as if they were to last for ever. Why do we not rather advance our thoughts to things that are eternal, and contemplate the heavenly original of all beings? Why do we not, by the divinity of reason, triumph over the weaknesses of flesh, and blood? It is by Providence that the world is preserved; and not from any virtue in the matter of it; for the world is as mortal as we are; only the *Almighty Wisdom* carries it safe through all the motions of corruption. And so by prudence, human life itself may be prolonged; if we will but stint ourselves in those pleasures that bring the greater part of us untimely to our end. Our passions are nothing more than certain disallowable motions of the mind; sudden, and eager; which, by frequency, and neglect, turn to a disease, as a distillation brings first to a cough; and then to phthisick. We are carried up to the heavens, and down again into the deep, alternately; so long as we are governed by our affections, and not by virtue: passion and reason are a sort of civil war within us; and as the

one or the other has dominion, we are either good, or bad. So that it should be our care, that the worst mixture may not prevail. And they are linked like the chain of causes, and effects, one to another; betwixt violent passion, and a fluctuation, or wambling of the mind, there is such a difference, as betwixt the agitation of a storm, and all the nauseous sickness of a calm. And they have all of them their symptoms too, as well as our bodily distempers: They that are troubled with the falling sickness, know when the fit is coming, by the cold of the extreme parts; the dazzling of the eyes: the failing of the memory; the trembling of the nerves, and the giddiness of the head: So that every man knows his own disorder, and should provide against it. Anger, love, grief, fear, may be read in the countenance; and so may the virtues too. Fortitude makes the eye vigorous; prudence makes it intent; reverence discovers itself in modesty; joy, in serenity; and truth, in openness, and simplicity. There are sown seeds of divine things in mortal bodies. If the mind be well cultivated, the fruit answers the original: and, if not, all runs into weeds. We are all of us sick of curable diseases; and it costs us more to be miserable, than would make us perfectly happy. Consider the peaceable state of clemency, and the tumults of anger; the softness, and quiet of modesty, and the restlessness of lust. How cheap and easy to us is the service of vices! The sovereign good of man, is a mind that subjects all things to itself; and is itself subject to nothing: His pleasures are modest, severe, and reserved; and rather the sauce, or the diversion of life, than the entertainment of it. It may be some question, whether such a man goes to heaven, or heaven comes to him: For a good man is influenced by God himself: And has a kind of divinity within him. What if one good man lives in pleasure and plenty, and another in want and misery? It is no virtue, to condemn superfluities, but necessities: And they are both of them equally good, though under several circumstances, and in different stations. Cato (the censor) waged war with the man-

ners of Rome: Scipio, with the enemies. Nay, bating the very conscience of virtue; who is there, that, upon sober thoughts, would not be an honest man, even for the credit of it? Virtue you shall find in the temple, in the field, or upon the walls, covered with dust, and blood, in the defence of the publick. Pleasures you shall find sneaking in the stews, sweating-houses, powdered and painted, &c. Not that pleasures are wholly to be disclaimed, but to be used with moderation, and to be made subservient to virtue. Good manners always please us; but wickedness is restless, and always changing; not for the better, but for variety. We are racked betwixt hopes and fears; by which means, Providence, (which is the greatest blessing of heaven) is turned into a mischief. When wild beasts see danger, they fly from it, and are quiet when they have escaped the danger; but wretched men are tormented both by things past and to come: Memory brings back the anxiety of past fears, and our foresight anticipates the future: Whereas the present makes no man wretched. Should we fear every thing that is possible, we should have no bounds to our miseries.



E P I S T L E XXIII.

We abuse God's blessings, and turn them into Evils. Thoughts upon the Horrors of Earthquakes, and Consolations against them. Death is the same whatever Way it comes: Only Accidents which are not common move us.

NOTHING is so profitable, but it may be perverted to an injury. What would become of commerce, if we had not the *winds*? Beside that, they sweeten the air, and bring seasonable rains upon the earth. Providence never designed them for war and devastation; and yet that is a great

part of the use we make of them; pursuing one hazard thro' another. We expose ourselves to tempests, and to death, without so much as the hope of a sepulchre. And all this might be born with too, if we only ran these hazards, in order to peace; but when we have escaped so many rocks and flats, thunder, and storms, what is the fruit of all our labour and terror? It is only war; and to burn and ravage, as if the earth were not large enough for the scene of our destruction. Whereas we might live and die with ease, if we chose it; and draw out our lives in security. Why do we press our own dangers then, and provoke our fates? What do we look for? Only death; which is to be found every where. It will find us in our beds, in our chambers: But, wheresoever it finds us let it find us innocent. What a madness is it to pursue mischiefs; to fall foul upon those we do not know; to be angry without a reason; to over-run whatsoever is in our way; and, like beasts, to kill what we have no quarrel to? Nay, worse than beasts, we run great risks only to bring us to greater. We force our way to gold, without any regard either to God or man. But, in all this, without any reason for complaint, we abuse the benefits of God, and turn them all into mischiefs. We dig for gold; we leave the light, and abandon the courses of a better nature: We descend, where we find a new position of things; hideous caves, hollow and pendent rocks, horrid rivers, a deep and perpetual darkness, and not without the apprehensions even of hell itself. How little now, and how inconsiderable are those things that men venture for, with the price of their lives? But to pass from those hazards that we may avoid, to others which we cannot, as in the case of *earthquakes*.

IN what situation can any man be safe, when the world itself is shaken; and the only thing that passes for fixed and unmoveable in the universe, trembles, and deceives us? Whither shall we fly for security, if wheresoever we are, the danger be still under our feet? Upon the cracking of a house, every man takes himself to his heels, and leaves all to save

himself: But what retreat is there, where that which should support us, fails us; when the foundation, not only of cities, but even the world itself, opens and wavers? What help, or what comfort, where fear itself can never carry us off? An enemy may be kept at a distance with a wall: A castle may put a stop to an army; a port may protect us from the fury of a tempest; fire itself does not follow him that runs away from it: A vault may defend us against thunder; and we may quit the place in a pestilence: There is some remedy in all those evils. Or however, no man ever knew a whole nation destroyed with lightning. A plague may unpeople a town, but it will not carry it away. There is no evil of such an extent, so inevitable, so greedy, and so publickly calamitous as an earthquake. For, it does not only devour houses, families, or single towns, but ruins whole countries and nations: Either overturning, or swallowing them up, without so much as leaving any vestige of what they were. Some people have a greater terror for this death than for any other. *To be taken away alive, out of the number of the living!* As if all mortals, by what means soever, were not to come to the same end. Nature has eminently this justice, that when we are all dead, we are all alike. And it is not a pin matter, whether I be crushed to pieces by one stone, or by a whole mountain; whether I perish by the fall of a house, or under the burden of the whole earth; whether I be swallowed up alone, or with a thousand more in company. What does it signify to me, the noise and conversation that is made about my death; when death is every where, and in all cases the same? We should therefore arm ourselves against that blow, that can neither be avoided nor foreseen. And, it is not the foreswearing of those places that we find infested with earthquakes that will do our business; for there is no place that can be warranted against them. What if the earth be not yet moved? It is still moveable; for the whole body of it lies under the same law, and exposed to danger; only some part at one time, and some at another. As it is in

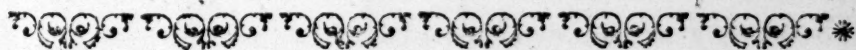
great cities, where all the houses are subject to ruin, though they do not all fall together: So in the body of the earth; now this part falls, and then that. Tyre was formerly subject to earthquakes: In Asia twelve cities were swallowed up in a night; Achaia and Macedonia have had their turns, and now Campagnia. The fate goes round, and strikes at last where it has a great while passed by. It falls out oftner, it is true, in some places, than in others: But, no place is quite free and exempt. And it is not only men, but cities, coasts, nay, the shores, and the very sea itself, that suffers under the dominion of fate. And yet we are so vain as to promise ourselves some sort of assurance in the goods of fortune: Never considering, that the very ground we stand upon is unstable. And, it is not the frailty of this or that place, but the quality of every spot of it: For, not one inch of it is so compacted, as not to admit many causes of its revolution, and though the bulk of the earth remain entire, the parts of it may yet be broken.

THERE is not any thing which can promise to itself a lasting quiet. And it is no small comfort to us, the certainty of our fate: For, it is a folly to fear, where there is a remedy. He that troubles himself sooner than he needs, grieves more also than is necessary: For the same weakness, that makes him anticipate his misery, makes him enlarge it too. The wise fortify themselves by reason, and fools by despair. That saying which was applied to a conquered party under fire and sword, might have been spoken to all mankind. *That man is in some sense out of danger, that is out of hope.* He that would fear nothing, should consider, that if he fears any thing, he must fear every thing. Our very meat and drink, sleeping and waking, without measure, are hurtful to us. Our bodies are nice and weak; and a small matter does their business. That man has too high an opinion of himself, that is only afraid of thunder and earthquakes. If he were conscious of his own infirmities, he would as much fear the being choked with his own phlegm. What do we see in our-

selves, that heaven and earth should join in a distemper to procure our dissolution; when the ripping of a hang-nail is enough to dispatch us? We are afraid of inundations from the sea, when a glass of wine, if it goes the wrong way, is enough to suffocate us. It is a great comfort in death, the very mortality itself. We creep under ground for fear of thunder, we dread the sudden concussions of the earth, and the rages of the sea; when yet we carry death in our own veins, and it is at hand in every place, and at all times. There is nothing so little but it is of force enough to bring us to our latter end. Nay, so far should we be from dreading an eminent fate, more than a vulgar, that on the contrary, since die we must, we should rather rejoice in the breathing of our last, under a more glorious circumstance. What if the ground stand still within its bounds, and without any violence? I shall have it over me at last; and it is all one to me, whether I be laid under that, or that lay itself over me: *But it is a terrible thing for the earth to gape, and swallow a man up into a profound abyss:* And what then? Is death any easier above ground? What reason have I for complaint, if nature will do me the honour to cover me with a part of herself? Since we must fall, there is a dignity in the very manner of it, when the world itself is shocked for company. Not that I would wish for a publick calamity; but it is some satisfaction in my death, that I see the world also to be mortal.

NEITHER are we to take these extraordinary revolutions for divine judgments; as if such motions of the heavens, and of the earth, were the denouncings of the wrath of the Almighty: But they have their ordinate, and their natural causes: Such as, in proportion, we have in our own bodies; and while they seem to act a violence, they suffer it. But yet, for want of knowing the causes of things, they are dreadful to us; and the more so, because they happen but seldom. *But why are we generally more afraid of that which we are not accustomed to?* Because we look upon nature with our

eyes, not with our reason: Rather computing what she commonly does, than what she is able to do. And we are punished for this negligence, by taking those things to which we are not wonted, to be new and prodigious. The eclipses of the sun and moon, blazing-stars, and meteors, while we admire them, we fear them; and since we fear them, because we do not understand them, it is worth our while to study them, that we may no longer fear them. Why should I fear a man, a beast, an arrow, or a lance; when I am exposed to the encounter of greater dangers? We are assaulted by the nobler part of nature itself; by the heavens, by the seas, and the land. Our business is therefore to defy death, whether extraordinary, or common. No matter for the threats of it, so long as it asks no more of us than age itself will take from us; and every petty accident that befalls us. He that contemns death, what does he care for fire or water; the very dissolution of the universe? Or if the earth should open under him, and shew him all the secrets of the infernal pit, he would look down without concern. In the place where we must all go to, there is no thunder, nor earthquakes; no stormy seas; neither pestilence, nor war. *Is it a small affair? Why do we fear it then? Is it a great matter? Let it rather fall on us at once, than hang long over us.* Why should I fear my own end, when I know that I must have an end, and that every thing is limited?



E P I S T L E XXIV.

A Discourse of God's Providence, in the Misfortunes of good Men in this World, and in the Prosperity of the Wicked.

I Observe that your servant has run away from you, which gives you great concern; but I do not hear that you are either poisoned, strangled, or robbed, or betrayed by

him: So that you have escaped well in comparison to some others. And why then should you complain under the protection of a gracious Providence, which suffers no person to be miserable, but by their own fault? Nor is this subject worthy of a wise man's consideration. The name of adversity is a terrible thing. Some men are banished and stripped of their estates; others again are poor, in plenty; (which is the basest sort of beggary.) Some are overborn by a popular tumult, that breaks out like a tempest, even in the highest security of a calm; or like a thunder-clap, that frightens all that are near it: There is but one struck, perhaps, but the fear extends to all; and those that *may* suffer, as well as those that *do*. As in the discharge of a piece only with powder; it is not the stroke, but the crack that frightens the birds. Adversity, I will grant you, is not a thing to be wished; no more than war; but if it be my fortune to be racked with the stone, broken upon the wheel, or to receive wounds or maims; it shall be my prayer that I may bear my fate as becomes a wise and an honest man. We do not pray for tortures, but for patience; not for war, but for generosity and courage, in all the extremities of a war, if it happens. Afflictions are but the exercise of virtue; and an honest man is out of his element, when he is idle. It must be practice and patience that perfects it. Do we not see how one wrestler provokes another? And if he find him not to be his match, he will call for some body to assist him, that may put him to all his strength.

It is a common argument against the justice of Providence, in the matter of reward, and punishment: *The misfortunes of good men in the world, and the prosperity of the wicked*: But, it is an easy matter to vindicate the cause of the Gods. There are many things which we call evil, which turn very often to the advantage of those that suffer them; or at least, for the common good, whereof Providence has the greater care. And farther: They either beset those that bear them willingly, or those that deserve them by their impatience under them: And

lastly, they come by divine appointment; and to those who are good men, even for that very reason, because they are good. Nor is there any thing more common, than for that which we feared as a calamity, to prove the foundation of our happiness. How many are there in the world who enjoy every thing to their own wish, whom God never thought worthy of a trial? If it might be imagined that the *Almighty* should take off his thought from his whole work, what more glorious spectacle could he reflect upon, than a valiant man struggling with adverse fortune; Or Cato's standing upright, and unmoved, under the shock of publick ruin? "Let the whole world (says he) fall into one band, and let Cæsar encompass me with his legions by land, his shipping at sea, and his guards at the gates; Cato will yet cut out his way; and with that weapon that was untainted, even in the civil war, give himself that liberty, which fate has denied to his country. Set upon the great work then, and deliver thyself from the clog of thy humanity. Juba and Petreius have already done this good office one for the other, by a generous concurrence of resolution and fate; but Cato is above example, and does as much scorn to ask his death of any man, as his life." With what joy did this great man contemplate immortality; when he took his book and his sword together; and in cold thoughts dispatched himself! Let this suffice of Cato, whose virtue Providence made use of to cope with all the powers of the earth. His courage took pleasure in, and sought for all occasions of danger; keeping his eye still upon the end, without valuing the difficulties of the passage. The sufference is one part of the glory, and though one man may escape without wounds, yet he is still more reverend and remarkable, that comes off bloody. The spite of great men is grievous, you will say, and yet he supported the oppositions of Pompey, Cæsar, and Crassus. It is troublesome to be repulsed. Vatinus was preferred before him. Prosperity shews a man but one part of human nature. No body knows what such a man is good

for: Neither in truth does he understand himself, for want of experiment. Temporal happiness is for weak, and vulgar minds; but, the subduing of publick terrors is a work that is reserved for more generous spirits. Misfortune is the touch-stone of a brave mind, that resolves to live and die free, and master of itself. The combatant brings no mettle into the field that was never battered: He that has lost blood, and yet keeps his stomach: He that has been under his enemy, and worsted, and yet comes on again, and gathers heart from his misfortunes; that is the man of hope and courage.

BUT, is it not a very unjust and a rigorous fate that good men should be poor and friendless? All this is no more than the natural work of matter and form. Mean souls are meanly principled: But, there goes more to the making up of a brave man, that is to work out his way through difficulties and storms. We are condemned to terrible encounters; and because we cannot, according to the course of nature, avoid them, we have faculties given us, which will enable us to bear them: Or at the worst, to have a retreat; if we will not fight, we may fly. So that nothing is made more easy to us, than that which is most necessary to us, to die. No man is kept in the world against his inclination. But adversity is the better for us all: For it is God's mercy to shew the world their errors, and that the things they fear and desire, are neither good nor bad; being the common and promiscuous lot both of good and bad men. If they were good, only the good should enjoy them: And if bad, only the wicked should suffer them. One man is taken away in a scuffle for a wench, and another in the defence of his country; and we find silver and gold, both in a temple, and in the stews.

Now to shew you that the virtue which I affect, is not so imaginary, and extravagant, as it is supposed to be, I will allow a wise man to tremble, to turn pale; nay, and to groan also: And to suffer all the affections of his bodily sense, provided that he keep his mind firm, and free from submission

to his body; and that he do not repent of his constancy, (which is in itself so great a virtue, that there is some authority, even in a pertinacious error.) If the body be brought by exercise, to the contempt of bruises and wounds, how much more easily then may the mind be fortified against the assaults of fortune; and though perhaps thrown down and trod upon, yet recover itself; the body must have meat, and drink, much labour, and practice; whereas the food, and the business of the mind is within itself; and virtue maintained without either labour or charge. If you say, that many professors of wisdom are wrought upon by threats, and mischiefs; these, let me tell you, are but proficients, and not as yet arrived at the state of wisdom: They are not strong enough to practise what they know. It is with our dispositions, as with our clothes: They will take some colours at one dipping: But others must be steeped over and over, before they will imbibe them. And so for disciplines, they must soak and lie long before they take the tincture. No man can receive an injury, and not be moved at it: But yet he may keep himself free from perturbations; and so far from being troubled at them, that he may make use of them for the experiment and trial of his virtue; keeping himself still moderate, calm, chearful, and safe in a profound quiet; and fixed in his station. *But if a wise man cannot be poor, how comes it that he is frequently without either meat, drink, cloaths, or lodging? If only fools are mad, how comes it then that wise men have their alienations of mind, and talk as idly in a fever as other people?* It is one thing, the receiving of an injury, and another thing, the conceiving of an indignation for it; it is the body in this case that suffers, (which is the fool's part) but not the mind. That man is never the worse pilot that by bad weather is forced behind his business. When a ship springs a leak, we do not quarrel either with the mariners or with the vessel. But some to the pump, others into the hold, to keep the ship above water. And if we cannot entirely master it, we must still work on; for it is then a great

point gained; if we can but keep it at a stay. Some men are strangely transported at the insolence of the porter, that refuses to let them into a great man's house. They forget that the door of a prison is not more strictly guarded than that of a palace. He that has business must pay for his passage, and sweeten him, as he would do a churlish cur with a sop. That which is to be sold is to be bought: He is a weak man that rates himself according to the civility of a slave. Let him have a reverence for himself, and then no matter who despises him. What if he should break his staff, or cause his master to turn him away, or to correct him? He that contends, supposes an *equality*; and even when he has got the better of him, admits that there *was* one. What if he should receive a blow? Cato (the greatest man of his age) did not only forgive it, but forget it.

It is not to say, that this or that is *tolerable* or *intolerable* to a sensible man. Fortune overcomes us, if we do not entirely subdue it. For a man to depend upon himself, is the foundation of a happy life: But an absolute peace of mind, and freedom from errors, must be the business of the next world.



EPISTLE XXV.

A good and wise Man is Proof against all the Accidents of Fate.

I Have now received the book which you promised me: I intended to have read it at my leisure hours; but when I had begun it, I could not lay it aside again till I had finished it. I shall only tell you now, that I am very well pleased with the choice of the subject; but the spirit and gentleness of it transports me. Upon a second reading you shall hear more from me; your goodness leaves no room for flattery. I find you always the same person, which is a sign of

wisdom; fools only vary in their temper and way of thinking. One while grave and saving; another while vain and profuse. Happy is the man who sees himself right at first, and remains so to the end. We call all fools madmen, tho' they are not all in Bedlam. We find some at the bar, some upon the bench, and not a few even in the senate itself. One man's folly is sad, another's wanton; and a third is busy and impertinent. A wise man carries all his treasure within himself: What fortune gives, she may take: But he lives nothing at her mercy. He stands firm, and keeps his ground against all misfortunes, without so much as changing countenance. He is free, inviolable, unshaken: Proof against all accidents: And not only invincible, but inflexible. So long as he cannot lose any thing of his own, he never troubles himself for what is another's. He is a friend to Providence, and will not repine at any thing that happens by God's appointment. He is not only resolute, but generous and good-tempered; and ready to lay down his life in a good cause; and for the publick good to sacrifice his own. He does not so much consider the pleasure of his life, as the need which the world has of him: And he is not so nice neither, as to be tired of his life, while he may serve his wife, or his friends. Nor is it all, that his life is profitable to them; but it is likewise pleasant to himself; and carries its own reward: For, what can be more comfortable, than to be so dear to another, as for that very reason to become dearer to himself? If he loses a child he is thoughtful; he is compassionate to the sick, and only troubled, when he sees men wallowing in infamy and vice. Whereas on the other side, you shall see nothing but restlessness; one man hankering after his neighbour's wife; another in pain about his own; a third in grief for a repulse; another as much out of temper for his success. If he loses an estate, he parts with it as a thing that was only adventitious. Or if it was of his own acquiring, he computes the possession, and loss; and says thus to himself, I shall live as well afterward, as I did before. Our houses (says he) may

be burnt or robbed; our lands taken from us; and we can call nothing our own, that is under the dominion of fortune. It is a foolish avarice, that restrains all things to a propriety, and believes nothing to be a man's own that is publick. Whereas a wise man judges nothing so much his own, as that wherein mankind is allowed a share. It is not with the blessings of Providence, as it is with a dole; where every man receives so much a head; but every man there has all. That which we eat, and either give, or receive with the hand, may be broken into parts; but peace and freedom of mind, are not to be divided. He that has first cast off the empire of fortune needs not fear that of great men, for they are but fortune's hands; nor was any man ever broken by adversity, that was not first betrayed by prosperity. *But what signifies philosophy, you will say, if there be a fate; if we be governed by fortune, or some over ruling power? For certainties are unchangeable, and there is no providing against uncertainties. If what I shall do, and resolve, be determined, what use of philosophy?* Yes, great use; for taking this to be granted, philosophy instructs, and advises us to obey God, and to follow him willingly; to oppose fortune resolutely, and to bear all accidents.

FATE is an irrevocable, and invincible, and an unchangeable decree; a necessity of all things and actions, according to eternal appointment. Like the course of a river, it moves forward without contradiction, or delay, in an irresistible flux, where one wave pushes on another. He knows little of God, that imagines it may be controuled. There is no changing of the purpose even of a wise man: For he sees before-hand what will be best for the future. How much more unchangeable then is the Almighty, to whom all futurity is always present? *To what end then is it, if fate be inexorable; to offer up prayers and sacrifices any farther, than to relieve the scruples, and the weakness of sickly minds?* My answer is, first, that the gods take no pleasure in the sacrifices of beasts, or in the images of gold and silver, but in a

pious and obedient will. And, secondly, that by prayers and sacrifices, angers and afflictions may be sometimes removed, sometimes lessened, other times deferred; and all this without any offence to the power, or necessity of fate. There are some things which Providence has left so far in suspense, that they seem to be (in a manner) conditional; in such sort that even seeming evils may, upon our prayers and supplications, be turned into goods. Which is so far from being against fate, that it is even a part of fate itself. You will say, *This shall come to pass, or not. If the former, it will be the same thing if we do not pray: And if the other, it will be the same thing if we do.* To this I must answer; That the proposition is false, for want of the middle exception betwixt the one, and the other. This will be (say I) that is, if there shall any prayers interpose in the case. But then do they object on the other side; that this very thing also is necessary: For it is likewise determined by fate, either that we shall pray, or not. What if I should now grant you, that there is a fate also even in our very prayers; a determination that we shall pray; and that therefore we shall pray? It is decreed that a man shall be eloquent; but, upon condition that he apply himself to letters: By the same fate it is decreed, that he shall so apply himself, and that therefore he shall learn. Such a man shall be rich, if he betake himself to navigation: But, the same fate that promises him a great estate, appoints also that he shall sail, and therefore he puts to sea. It is the same case in expiations; a man shall avoid dangers if he can, by his prayers, avoid the threatnings of divine vengeance: But this is a part of his fate also, that he shall so do, and therefore he does it. These arguments are made use of, to prove, that there is nothing left to our will, but that we are all over-ruled by fatalities. When we come to handle that matter, we shall shew the consistency of free-will with fate, having already made it appear, that notwithstanding the certain orders of fate, judgments may be averted by prayers, and supplications, and without any repugnance

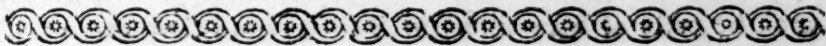
efficient; as the workman. The *formal*; as that which is stamped upon all operations. And the *final*; which is the intention of the whole work. Now to explain this. The first cause of the statue (for the purpose) is the copper; for it never had been made, if there had not been something to work upon. The second is the artificer; for if he had not understood his art, it had never succeeded. The third cause is the form; for it could never properly have been the statue of such, or such a person, if such a resemblance had not been put upon it. The fourth cause is the intention of making it, without which it had never been made: As money, if it were made for sale; glory, if the workman made it for his credit; or religion, if he designed the bestowing of it upon a temple. Plato adds a fifth, which he calls the *idea*, or exemplar, by which the workman draws his copy. And he makes God to be full of these figures, which he represents to be inexhaustible, unchangeable, and immortal. Now upon the whole matter, give us your opinion. To me it appears, that here are either too many causes assigned, or too few; and they might as well have introduced time and place, as some of the rest. Either clear the matter in question; or deal plainly, and tell us that you cannot: And so let us return to those cases, wherein all mankind is agreed, the reforming of our lives, and the regulation of our manners. For these subtleties are but time lost: let us examine ourselves in the first place, and afterward the world.

THERE is no great hurt in passing over those things which we are never the better for when we know, and, it is so ordered by Providence, that there is no great difficulty in learning, or acquiring those things which may make us either happier, or better. Beside that, whatsoever is hurtful to us, we have drawn out of the very bowels of the earth.

EVERY man knows, without telling, that this wonderful fabrick of the universe is not without a governor; and that a constant order cannot be the work of chance: For the parts would then fall foul upon each other. The motions of the

stars, and their influences, are acted by the command of an eternal decree. It is by the dictate of an almighty Power, that the heavy body of the earth hangs in balance. Whence come the revolutions of the seasons, and the flux of rivers; the wonderful virtue of the smallest seeds? As an *oak* to arise from an *acorn*. To say nothing of those things that appear most irregular, and uncertain; as clouds, rain, thunder, the eruptions of fire out of mountains, earthquakes, and those tumultuary motions in the lower region of the air, which have their ordinate causes; and so have those things too, which appear to us more admirable, because less frequent. As scalding fountains, and new islands started out of the sea: Or, what shall we say of the ebbing and flowing of the ocean, the constant times and measures of the tides, according to the changes of the moon that influences most bodies? But this needs not; for it is not that we doubt of Providence, but complain of it. And it were a good office to reconcile mankind to the Gods, who are undoubtedly best to the best. It is against nature that good should hurt good. A good man is not only the friend of God, but the very image, the disciple, and the imitator of him, and the true child of his heavenly father. He is true to himself; and acts with constancy, and resolution. Scipio by a cross wind, being forced into the power of his enemies, cast himself upon the point of his sword; and, as the people were enquiring, what was become of the general; *The general* (says Scipio) *is very well*, and expired. What is it for a man to fall, if we consider the end, beyond which no man can fall? We must repair to wisdom for arms against fortune; for it were unreasonable for her to furnish arms against herself. A gallant man is fortune's match. His courage provokes and despises those dreadful appearances, that would otherwise enslave us. A wise man is not free from the malice of fortune, though he is out of the reach of it; and all attempts upon him are no more than Xerxes's arrows; they cannot strike the sun, though they darken the day. There is nothing so holy as to be

privileged from sacrilege. But to strike and not wound is lost anger; and he who is struck and not hurt is invulnerable. His resolution is tried, the waves may dash themselves upon a rock, but not break it. Temples may be prophaned, and demolished, but the deity still remains unhurt.



E P I S T L E XXVII.

*Traditions of the Ancients relating to Thunder and Lightning:
with Seneca's Thoughts upon it.*

THAT Providence has given mortals the tokens and fore-runners of things to come, is certain; and by these means the decrees of fate are laid open: Only we take notice of some things, without paying attention to others. According to the course of nature, there is nothing done which is not either the sign or reason of something which follows; so that wherever there is order, there is room for prediction. But there is no judgment to be given upon accidents. Now, though it is a very hard matter to arrive at the foreknowledge of things to come, and to foretel particularly what shall hereafter happen, upon a certain knowledge of the power and influences of the stars: It is yet unquestionable that they have a power, though we cannot expressly say what it is. In the subject of thunder there are several opinions, as to the significations of it. The *Stoicks* hold, that because the cloud is broken, therefore the *bolt* is shot (*according to common speech.*) Others conjecture, that the cloud is broken to that very end, that it may discharge the thunder-bolt, referring all in such sort to God, as if the signification did not arise from the thing done, but as the thing itself were done for the signification sake: But, whether the signification goes before, or follows, it comes all to the same purpose. There are three sorts of lightning; the first is so pure and subtile, that it

pierces through whatsoever it encounters: The second shatters and breaks every thing to pieces: The other burns, either by blasting, consuming, inflaming, or discolouring, and the like. Some lightnings are monitory, some are threatening, and others they fancy to be promising. They allot to Jupiter three sorts; the first is only monitory, and gentle, which he casts of his own accord: the second they make to be an act of counsel, as being done by the vote and advice of twelve Gods. This, they say, often does some good, but not without some harm also. As the destruction of one man may prove the caution of another. The third is the result of a counsel of the superior deities, from whence proceed great mischiefs both publick and private. Now; this is a great folly to suppose that Jupiter would wreak his displeasure upon pillars, trees, nay upon temples themselves, and yet let the sacrilegious go free: To strike sheep, and consume altars; and all this upon a consultation of the Gods; as if he wanted either skill or justice, to govern his own affairs by himself; either in sparing the guilty, or in destroying the innocent. Now what should be the mystery of all this? The wisdom of our forefathers found it necessary to keep wicked people in awe, by the apprehension of a superior power; and to fright them into their good behaviour, by the fear of an armed, and an avenging justice over their heads. But how comes it, that the lightning which comes from Jupiter himself should be said to be harmless; and that which he casts upon counsel and advice, to be dangerous and mortal? The moral of it is this, that all kings should have Jupiter's example, to do all good by themselves; and when severity is necessary, permit that to be done by others: Beside that, as crimes are unequal, so also should be the punishments. Neither did they believe that Jupiter to be the Thunderer, whose image was worshipped in the Capitol, and in other places; but intended it for the Maker and Governor of the universe, by what name soever we call him. Now, in truth, Jupiter does not immediately cast the lightning himself; but leaves

nature to her ordinary method of operation; so that what he does not immediately by himself, he does yet cause to be done: For whatsoever nature does, God does. There may be something gathered out of all things, that are either said or done, that a man may be the better for; and he does a greater thing that masters the fear of thunder, than he that discovers the reason of it. We are surrounded and beset with ill accidents; and as we cannot avoid the stroke of them, let us prepare ourselves honestly to bear them. But, how must that be? By the contempt of death we do also contemn all things in the way to it; as wounds, shipwrecks, the fury of wild beasts, or any other violence whatsoever; which, at the worst, can but part the soul and the body. And we have this sort of consolation, though our lives are at the mercy of fortune, she has yet no power over the dead.

How many are there that call for death in the distress of their hearts, even for the very fear of it? And, this unadvised desire of death, does in common, affect both the best and the worst of men; only with this difference, the former despise, and the other are weary of it.

IT is a nauseous thing to serve the body, and to be so many years a doing such beastly things, over and over. It is well, if in our lives we can please others; but whatever we do in our deaths, let us be sure to please ourselves. Death is a thing which no care can avoid; no felicity can time it; no power overcome it. Other things are disposed of by chance and fortune; but death treats all men in the same way.

ALL must die, the prosperous as well as the unfortunate; and I think the very desire of overcoming our fate should give us courage to encounter it. There is no resolution so obstinate as that which is occasioned by necessity; it makes a coward as brave as Julius Cæsar, though upon different principles. We are all certain of death; and as nature brings forth one generation, she calls back another; the time only is uncertain.



E P I S T L E XXVIII.

*A Contemplation of Heaven and heavenly Things. Of God:
And of the Soul.*

THE difference betwixt philosophy and other arts is very great; and the difference betwixt that philosophy which is of divine contemplation, and that which regards things here below is much greater. It is much braver; and not being content with what it sees, it aspires to something greater and fairer, which is by nature placed out of our knowledge. One only teaches us what is to be done upon earth; the other reveals that which is actually done in heaven: The one discusses our errors, and holds the light to us, by which we distinguish in the ambiguities of life; the other surmounts that darkness which we are wrapt up in, and carries us up to the fountain of light itself. And then it is, that we are in a special manner to acknowledge the infinite grace, and bounty of the nature of things; when we see it not only where it is publick, and common, but in the very secrets of it; as being admitted into the cabinet of the divinity itself. There it is that we are taught to understand what is the *matter* of the world, who is the *author* and preserver of it. What *God* himself is, and whether he be wholly intent upon himself; or at any time descends to consider *us*. Whether he has done his work *once for all*; or whether he be *still in action*: Whether he be a *part of the world*, or the *world itself*: Whether he be at *liberty*, or no, to resolve upon any thing anew to-day, and to controul, or derogate from the law of fate. Whether it be any diminution of his wisdom, or any confession of error, to do and undo. Or to have made things that were afterwards to be altered: For, the same things must of necessity always please him, who can never be pleased, but

with that which is best. Now this is no lessening, either of his liberty, or of his power; for he himself is his own necessity. Without the benefit, and the comfort of these thoughts, it had been even as well for us never to have been born. For to what purpose do we live? Is it only to eat and to drink? To stuff up an infirm and fluid carcase, that would perish without it; and to live only a servant to one that is sick? To fear death, to which we were all born? Take away this inestimable good, and life itself is not worth the labour, and the care of it. Oh! how wretched, how contemptible a thing were man, if he should not advance himself above the state of human affairs! So long as we struggle with our passions, what is there in the world that we do, which is glorious? Nay, if we advance ourselves so far as to overcome them, it is but the destroying of so many monsters. And have we not then a mighty exploit to value ourselves upon, when we have made ourselves a little more tolerable than the worst of men? Is it not a surprising matter to boast, that we are a little stronger than a man that is sick? Alas! Alas! my friend, there is a great difference betwixt strength and health. You have not a wicked mind, perhaps; you may have a clear brow; a tongue that will not flatter, and a single heart: You have not the avarice perhaps, that refuses to itself whatsoever it takes from other people; nor that luxury, that squanders away money shamefully, and yet more shamefully repairs it: Nor that ambition that leads you by unworthy ways to places of preferment. These are only negatives; and you have got nothing all this while. You will tell me, that you have escaped many things: But you have not yet escaped yourself. The virtue that you recommend, is high and illustrious. Not that it is a happiness in itself, to be free from evil; but because it dignifies, and enlarges the mind; because it prepares for the knowledge of heavenly things, and makes it capable even of conversing with God himself. It is then arrived at the highest pitch of human happiness, when it soars aloft, and enters into the privacies

of nature, trampling all that is evil, or vulgar under its feet. What a pleasure, what a transport is it, for a soul that is wandering among the stars, to look down, and laugh at the palaces of princes, and the whole globe of the earth, and all its treasures! I do not speak of that only which is converted into money, and plate, but of that also which is reserved in the bowels of the earth, to gratify the insatiable covetousness of posterity. Nor can we ever bring ourselves to the absolute contempt of luxurious ornaments, rich furniture, stately buildings, pleasant gardens, and fountains; till we have the world under us, and till looking down from the heavens, and perceiving that spot of ground we live upon, the greater part of it covered with the sea; beside a great deal of it desolate, and either scorched or frozen; we shall say thus to ourselves. *Is this miserable point the ball of contention, that is divided among so many nations with fire and sword? How ridiculous are the bounds, as well as the contests of mortals! Such a prince must not pass such a river; nor another prince those mountains; and, why do not the pismires canton out their posts, and jurisdictions too?* For, what does the bustle of troops and armies amount to, more than the business of a swarm of ants upon a mole-hill? The scene of all the important actions here below, where both at sea and land we tug and scuffle for dominion and wealth, is but a wretched point of earth; whereas the dominions of the soul above are boundless. This very contemplation gives us force, liberty, and nourishment: The mind is there at home: And it has this argument of its divinity, that it takes delight in what is divine. It contemplates the rising and the falling of the stars, and the admirable harmony of order, even in their various motions: Discussing, and enquiring into every thing, as properly belonging to itself. With how much scorn does it then reflect upon the narrowness of its former habitation? There it is that it learns the end of its proper being; the knowledge of God. And what is God? *An unbounded and almighty Power, with unlimited goodness, and does whatsoever*

he pleases. He who applies to this study, suppresses the very lot and condition of his mortality; that almighty power is all that we see, and all we do not see. What difference is there between the divine nature and ours? Man is compounded, and his mind is his best part: But the Almighty is all mind, and reason; yet poor mortals are so blind, that the actions of this inconceivable power, so excellent for beauty, constancy, and disposition, are looked upon as only the work of chance, and subject to all the tumults of thunder, clouds, and storms, which affect poor mortals. It is not common people only, which are so foolish, but wise men also discover their weakness in this respect. There are people who arrogate to themselves the faculties of Providence, and reason, and the skill of disposing of other people's affairs as well as their own: And yet those men are so foolish as to suppose, that the world is governed by an unadvised rashness; as if nature was insensible of what she did. How advantageous would it be for us to know the reality of things, and to allow them their just terms and measures? To make inquiry into the power of the Almighty, and the method of his workings; if he made the *matter* itself, or found it ready to his hand; and whether the *matter* or the *idea* of it was first? If he does what he pleases; and what can be the reason of so many seeming imperfections in his operations. It was well said by Aristotle, that we should handle divine matters with reverence and modesty. When we enter a temple, or approach the altar, we compose our looks and our actions to all the decencies of humility and respect: Of how much more consequence is it, when we treat of heavenly things, to deal ingenuously, and not let a syllable pass our lips which may appear like confidence, rashness, or ignorance? Truth lies deep, and must be brought up at leisure. How many mysteries there are, which God has placed out of our sight, and can only be reached by contemplation and thought! The notions of the divinity are obscure and profound, or perhaps we do not understand them. But the divine Maje-

ty is only accessible to the mind. We are not able to determine what this is (without which nothing is); and when we have guessed at some sparks of it, the greater part is yet concealed from us. There are in this age many creatures that were never known to us before, and in the next age how many will they know which we do not! Many people at this day are unacquainted with the very rites of religion; what we pursue most eagerly, we are not yet arrived at; that is, a perfection in wickedness. Vice is continually improving: We increase in luxury, immodesty, and a prostitute dissolution of manners. Our men are grown effeminate in their notions, and in their dress. Philosophy is entirely neglected, except in bad weather, when there is no play or other diversion to entertain them.

E I N I S.

